



The

# Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



## Joyful Witness

Take the time to marvel at new growth around, within you, page 12.

*'I could trust everything with him'*

## A mother's advice and the eyes of faith help a young adult find his path to God

*(Editor's note: In this series, The Criterion is featuring young adults who have found a home in the Church and strive to live their faith in their everyday life.)*

Seventh in an occasional series

By John Shaughnessy

There are moments between a mother and her child that may seem ordinary to most people, but they are special and even sacred to the two persons who share them.

For 34-year-old Saul Llacsá, one such moment came when he was 7—a moment that's shaped his life ever since, especially during the toughest times he's had to endure.

Looking back on his years of growing up in the South American country of Bolivia, Llacsá recalls that sacred moment as being part of a time when his parents were "very poor," a time when they also did their best to provide opportunities for their eight children and help them understand what's most important in life.

"I think that everything happens in the family," he says. "One day, my mother took me to the church when I was 7. She told me that when you feel something in your life is going down, just come here to the church and talk to God. She said, 'He is right here. You don't have to come with mom. You can do it by yourself.'"

"So that's what I did. That became a routine in my life. Every Friday after school, I was going to church, 'Hey Jesus, how are you? How's your day going?' I was talking to him like a friend about what was happening in my life. Then I started having a relationship with him, that I could trust everything with him."

He especially relied upon that relationship when he was 23 in 2010—the year when his father died, followed nine months later by the death of his mother.

As he talks about that year, the emotions overflow for Llacsá, the coordinator of Hispanic Ministry for the Archdiocese of



As the coordinator of Hispanic Ministry for the archdiocese, Saul Llacsá has drawn upon his mother's wisdom to lead people closer to God. (Photo by John Shaughnessy)

Indianapolis. With tears filling his eyes, he reaches for a tissue, then another. Then he shares something surprising.

### A dramatic turn

"I'm not crying for losing my parents. They did a great job. Awesome people," he says. "I'm crying over happiness. I'm crying more for what came later.

"During that year, it was curious that I never felt alone, even though the absence of my parents was so painful. God and the Mother Church never let me walk alone. *You lost your parents, but I'm here. I will never let you be orphaned. If your parents are not here, I'm here to take care of you.* The Church taught me that she was going to take care of me in ways I never imagined. This is faith for me—to trust in God during any adversity."

Llacsá's path to that point of faith and trust in God took a dramatic turn in 2011.

By then, he had graduated from college and law school in Bolivia, and his life plan included moving to Chicago to attend a school so he could master the English language. He would then use that ability to return to work in his brother's law firm in Bolivia and help expand the family business into international law.

After he shares those details, Llacsá smiles. Then his smile

See LLACSA, page 8

## Christ's victory over death proclaims a second chance for all, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Easter liturgies—with the fire, sharing of light from the paschal candle, the renewal of

baptismal promises and the proclamation that Jesus has risen—assure people that it is never too late to start again, Pope Francis said.



Pope Francis

"It is always possible to begin anew, because there is a new life that God can awaken in us in spite of all our failures," the pope said

on April 3 during his celebration of the Easter Vigil.

With Italy in lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pope Francis celebrated a pared-down Easter Vigil at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica with an estimated 200 people present, and returned the next morning with a similarly small congregation for Easter Mass and to give his blessing "*urbi et orbi*" (to the city and the world).

The vigil was simpler than usual, but there still was the blessing of the fire, which blazed at the foot of the basilica's main altar, and the lighting of the Easter candle. Then, the darkened basilica slowly began to glow with the light of candles being shared by the concelebrants and the faithful present.

In his homily at the vigil, the pope said the Gospel proclamation of the Resurrection and the angel's invitation to the women at Jesus' tomb to "go to Galilee" (Mk 16:7) was a call to return to "the place where the Lord first sought them out and called them to follow him."

Although his followers often misunderstood Jesus and even abandoned him "in the face of the cross," he still urges them to "begin anew," the pope said.

"In this Galilee," the pope said, "we learn to be amazed by the Lord's infinite love, which opens new trails along the path of our defeats."

The pope said the call to return to Galilee also means to set out on a new path, away

See EASTER, page 2

## Catholics from across the archdiocese joyfully return to chrism Mass during Holy Week

By Sean Gallagher

"What a difference a year makes." Archbishop Charles C. Thompson happily shared that thought at the start of the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass celebrated on March 30, Tuesday of Holy Week, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

During Holy Week in 2020, churches throughout central and southern Indiana and around the world were shuttered because of the coronavirus pandemic in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19.

As a result, the archdiocesan chrism Mass was postponed until June 29. Those taking part in the liturgy were confined to priests serving in the archdiocese,

See CHRISM, page 10



Priests serving in central and southern Indiana raise their hands in prayer during the blessing of chrism on March 30 during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Standing in the front row are Fathers James Bonke, left, Joseph Feltz and George Plaster. (Photo by Sean Gallagher)



Pope Francis lights the paschal candle at the start of the Easter Vigil in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on April 3. The Easter Vigil was celebrated in a near empty basilica for the second year in a row as Italy continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. (CNS photo/Remo Casilli, Reuters)

# EASTER

continued from page 1

from the tomb and from indulging in grief. Like those at the tomb, he said, "many people experience such a 'faith of memories,' as if Jesus were someone from the past, an old friend from their youth who is now far distant, an event that took place long ago, when they attended catechism as a child.

"Let us go to Galilee, then, to discover that God cannot be filed away among our childhood memories, but is alive and filled with surprises," he said. "Risen from the dead, Jesus never ceases to amaze us."

The call to go to Galilee—a region inhabited by "those farthest from the ritual purity of Jerusalem"—is a reminder for Christians to go out to the peripheries and imitate Jesus who brought the presence of God to those who were excluded.

"The risen Lord is asking his disciples to go there even now, to the settings of daily life, the streets we travel every day, the corners of our cities," the pope said. "There the Lord goes ahead of us and makes himself present in the lives of those around us, those who share in our day, our home, our work, our difficulties and hopes."

Pope Francis said Jesus calls on all Christians today to "overcome barriers, banish prejudices," and to recognize the Lord "here in our Galilees, in everyday life.

"If on this night, you are experiencing an hour of darkness, a day that has not yet dawned, a light dimmed or a dream shattered," he said, "open your heart with amazement to the message of Easter: 'Do not be afraid, he has risen! He awaits you in Galilee'" (Mk 16:6, 7).

As is customary, Pope Francis did not preach at the Easter morning Mass, which featured the chanting of the Gospel in both Latin and Greek.

With Italy on another lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the pope gave his Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) standing inside St. Peter's Basilica rather than from the balcony overlooking a full St. Peter's Square.

"The Easter message does not offer us a mirage or reveal a magic formula," the pope said before giving the blessing. "It does not point to an escape from the difficult situation we are experiencing. The pandemic is still spreading, while the social and economic crisis remains severe, especially for the poor."

The pope offered prayers for the sick and those who have died of COVID-19 and for the

doctors and nurses who have made "valiant efforts" to care for the pandemic's victims.

And he had special words of Easter hope for young people struggling in isolation from their friends. "Experiencing real human relationships, not just virtual relationships, is something that everyone needs, especially at an age when a person's character and personality is being formed," he said.

"I express my closeness to young people throughout the world and, in these days, especially to the young people of Myanmar committed to supporting democracy and making their voices heard peacefully, in the knowledge that hatred can be dispelled only by love," he said.

Pope Francis prayed for many places in the world where the need to fight the pandemic has not silenced the weapons of war and violence.

"This is scandalous," he said. "Armed conflicts have not ended, and military arsenals are being strengthened."

The Gospel witnesses to the Resurrection, he said, "report an important detail: the risen Jesus bears the marks of the wounds in his hands, feet and side. These wounds are the everlasting seal of his love for us. All those who experience a painful trial in body or spirit can find refuge in these wounds and, through them, receive the grace of the hope that does not disappoint.

"May the light of the risen Jesus be a source of rebirth for migrants fleeing from war and extreme poverty," he prayed. "Let us recognize in their faces the marred and suffering face of the Lord as he walked the path to Calvary. May they never lack concrete signs of solidarity and human fraternity, a pledge of the victory of life over death that we celebrate on this day."

And while the pandemic restrictions meant simpler and smaller Vatican celebrations of Easter, Pope Francis noted that in many places the limitations are stricter and even prevent people from going to church.

"We pray that those restrictions, as well as all restrictions on freedom of worship and religion worldwide, may be lifted and everyone be allowed to pray and praise God freely," he said.

"Calling again for a fair and speedy distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, the pope said that "in embracing the cross, Jesus bestowed meaning on our sufferings, and now we pray that the benefits of that healing will spread throughout the world." †



## Public Schedule of Archbishop Charles C. Thompson

April 10–20, 2021

**April 10 – 10 a.m. CST**  
Diaconate ordinations at Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln, St. Meinrad

**April 11 – 8 a.m. CST**  
Mass at St. Michael Church, Cannelton

**April 11 – 10:30 a.m. CST**  
Mass with First Holy Communion at St. Pius V Church, Troy

**April 13 – 10:30 a.m.**  
Priest Personnel Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center, Indianapolis

**April 13 – 7 p.m.**  
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

**April 14 – 7 p.m.**  
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

**April 15 – 10 a.m.**  
Leadership Team meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**April 15 – 3:30 p.m.**  
Catholic Community Foundation Advisory Board meeting at Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center

**April 15 – 7 p.m.**  
Confirmation Mass for youths of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

**April 16 – 6:30 p.m.**  
Legacy Gala Dinner in support of Catholic Charities, archdiocesan Catholic Schools and Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary at JW Marriott Hotel, Indianapolis

**April 18 – 2 p.m.**  
Confirmation for youths of St. Paul Catholic Center and St. Charles Borromeo Parish, both in Bloomington, at St. Paul Catholic Center, Bloomington

**April 18 – 5 p.m.**  
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Martin of Tours Parish, Martinsville; St. John the Apostle Parish, Bloomington; St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Bedford; St. Mary Parish, Mitchell; Our Lady of the Springs Parish, French Lick; and St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Spencer, at St. John the Apostle Church, Bloomington

**April 20 – 7 p.m.**  
Confirmation Mass for youths of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral

## Easter season is time to seek the risen Lord, experience joy, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Easter season, which lasts until Pentecost, is a time for rejoicing and for always seeking out the risen Christ, Pope Francis said.

"To find Christ means to discover peace of heart," he said on April 5 as he led the recitation of the "Regina Coeli" prayer from the library of the Apostolic Palace.

With Italy in another COVID-19 lockdown, the midday recitation was livestreamed.

But Pope Francis reminded viewers how the women who went to Jesus' tomb and found it empty, "after initially being shaken, experience great joy in discovering the master alive.

"In this Easter season," he said, "my wish is that everyone might have the same spiritual experience, welcoming in our hearts, in our homes and in our families the joyful proclamation of Easter: 'Christ, having risen from the dead dies now no more; death will no longer have dominion over him.'"

From Easter to Pentecost, Catholics pray the "Regina Coeli" in place of the

Angelus prayer as an affirmation of the joy of the Resurrection they should experience throughout the Easter season, he said. The prayer begins, "Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia," because "now Mary's joy is complete: Jesus lives, love has conquered. May this be our joy as well!"

After Jesus was buried, the authorities ordered a stone rolled in front of the tomb to keep the disciples from stealing Jesus' body. The stone, the pope said, "was supposed to be the seal of the victory of evil and death."

But the Gospel of Matthew says, "There was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, approached, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it," (Mt 28:2).

"All of the plans and defenses of Jesus' enemies and persecutors were in vain," he said. "The image of the angel sitting on the stone before the tomb is the concrete, visible manifestation of God's victory over evil, of Christ's victory over the prince of this world, of light over darkness." †

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# Are increased vaccinations a genuine sign of hope this Easter?

WASHINGTON (CNS)—It's been said before, in different ways, in different contexts: "the beginning of the end," "light at the end of the tunnel," "our long national nightmare is over," and so on.

But as the coronavirus pandemic enters its second year, the increasing number of vaccinations may qualify as an authentic sign of hope as the Easter season draws upon us.

President Joe Biden's target of 100 million shots in the first 100 days of his presidency was eclipsed at the halfway point. The total number of vaccinations injected in Americans through April 1 stood at 153,631,404, with 3,358,112 doses administered on April Fool's Day—and that's no joke.



Nick Ragone

Ascension Health, one of the largest Catholic hospital chains in the United States, has administered 750,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and has held mass vaccination clinics in several of its markets, according to a March 30 e-mail to

Catholic News Service (CNS) from Nick Ragone, Ascension executive vice president and chief marketing and communications officer.

The demand for shots crashed the vaccine registration sites of many jurisdictions. With those problems largely fixed, the supply is rising to the point where governments are preregistering broad swaths of the population—sometimes those as young as 16—instead of the demographic slivers that characterized the early vaccine rollout.

West Virginia, population 1.8 million, the last state to report its first COVID-19 case—had administered 450,000 doses through Feb. 21, with 9% of its residents having received both doses of either the Pfizer or the Moderna two-shot regimen. If West Virginia were its own country, it would have ranked third in the world at that time.

The Mountaineer State passed on website registration because many of its

older residents have either little computer savvy or a stable internet connection, choosing instead to make reservations by phone. West Virginia also eschewed vaccine sites at chain drugstores and supermarkets, opting for county and local health departments.

Even the economy offers signs of hope. The federal Labor Department's monthly first-Friday jobs report on April 2 showed a gain of 916,000 jobs from the month before.

"It is a very positive jobs report, very strong—much stronger than anticipated—by me and by many other economists," said Nicole Smith, chief economist at Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce. Smith said she was figuring on about 500,000 jobs being added to the economy, but instead nearly twice that figure was reported.

What does this reflect? Hope. Smith used the word "optimism." And the source of that optimism? "Americans are now being vaccinated," she replied, "so they feel more confident about going out there and actually working."

Women did particularly well in the past month, as employment in the hospitality and restaurant fields surged, Smith noted. There is more reason for hope, she added, as the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan bill was signed into law in March, and Biden has proposed a \$2.2 trillion American Jobs Plan package that would tackle infrastructure and a host of other needs.

If hope is a silver lining, there are still dark clouds.

As of *The Criterion* going to press, 21 states have either lifted mask-wearing rules or never had them in the first place. Some states are reporting a spike in COVID-19 cases, with more contagious and possibly more deadly variants, that could signal a fourth wave of the coronavirus. And as of April 6, 554,064 are known dead from COVID-19 in the United States alone.

While some of the world's poorest nations are now getting their first shipments of vaccines, many others still have none; the world's richer nations have been taking care of their own citizens first. But even within the United States,

poorer racial and ethnic groups have been vaccinated at lower rates.

In Iowa, representatives of the state's four dioceses conducted a conference call on March 26 with the governor's office, as both parties seek to erase inequities resulting in lower vaccination rates for immigrants, refugees, Hispanics, African Americans and other groups, such as workers in Iowa's many meatpacking plants.

"In virtually all cases, we are talking 'essential workers,' many of whom, particularly at the packing plants, are at greatest risk of exposure and once exposed, passing it on to the larger community," said Glenn Leach, a longtime volunteer in the Diocese of Davenport.

"We are concerned not only for the immigrant-refugee worker and family populations, but the folks that they see and can expose," Leach told *The Catholic Messenger*, Davenport's diocesan newspaper. He described such a scenario: "Father, mother exposed at work. Pass to children. Children go to school, play with and expose others. Parents shop, expose others."

Economically speaking, the unemployment rate may be at 6%, but the economy is still down 8.4 million jobs since the pandemic's start in March 2020, said Elise Gould, a senior economist at the Economic Policy Institute. Were jobs added at the same pre-pandemic rate over the past year-plus, the U.S. is short 11 million jobs, she added.

Gould said, in an April 2 analysis of the Labor Department report, that nearly 14 million people could be added to the 9.7 million Americans officially described as unemployed if one includes people getting fewer hours and less pay due to the pandemic; those out of the workforce but not part of the count; unemployed workers

who went uncounted; and those mistakenly classified as "employed, and at work."

Still, hope is legitimate—and not false solely because it hasn't been fully realized.

"When people are living through a period of much stress, the ability to generate hope and maintain it are one of the crucial variables, whether people can adapt to big upheavals and challenges in their life," said Adam Brown, a faculty member of the psychology department at the New School for Social Research in New York City.

Brown cited a research campaign at Emory University in Atlanta that indicates "the more people know about their parents' histories, the more people know about their grandparents' histories, there are higher levels of self-esteem. There's something about these stories that enable us to contextualize and relate to our current stressors."

He added, "Whether we're talking about the story of Easter, the story of Passover, especially during spring, I think there are absolutely stories—and key messages in those stories—that we can draw on to imagine that sense of hope when there is so much fear, so much darkness, so much uncertainty."

Brown added one caveat: "I'm not a theologian."

But Paige Hochschild is. A moral theologian, she's chair of the theology department at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Md.

Hope, Hochschild said, is "a great way to think about Easter." Moreover, "maybe vaccination provides a kind of hope."

More germane to her thinking, though, is that "part of the Catholic faith-and-reason thing is that we take the best scientific evidence that we have, admitting that it's going to be somewhat limited, and we do things for the common good." †

## What role has the Blessed Mother played in your life of faith?

Perhaps no saint in heaven is more beloved, fosters more devotion or is called upon more frequently for intercession and aid than the Blessed Mother Mary.

The month of May is dedicated to the Blessed Mother. To honor her, *The Criterion* is seeking reader responses on the role Mary plays in your faith. How has she worked in your life to offer assistance or consolation? Do you have special devotion to her

under a particular title, and if so, why? How has she brought you closer to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Send your thoughts, experiences and stories by April 30 to Natalie Hoefer at [nhoefer@archindy.org](mailto:nhoefer@archindy.org) or by mail to The Criterion, attention, Natalie Hoefer—Mary, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN, 46202. Please include the name of your parish and a daytime phone number where you can be reached. †

# HOPE

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## Editorial



Pope Francis walks near flowers prior to delivering his Easter message and blessing “*urbi et orbi*” (to the city and the world) after celebrating Easter Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican on April 4. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

## Easter celebrates life

During the Easter season, Christians celebrate life. More specifically, we celebrate the great victory that was won when Christ surrendered to death in order to restore life to its predominant place in the realm of existence. Because of Christ’s resurrection, life now has the last word. We rejoice during Easter because we know that sin and death have been conquered by love, the animating principle of all life.

Of course, we human beings still sin, and we all have to die, but we believe that life triumphs in the end. That’s why we are adamant in our defense of life. It’s why we treat all of God’s creation—life itself—with profound reverence and respect.

As Pope Francis reminds us constantly, we must guard against the idea that we are free to cast life aside or abuse what God has made casually and without regard for its dignity. Life is a precious gift to be nurtured, cherished and protected always.

The Catholic Church believes and teaches that all human life is sacred from conception to natural death because each person is created in the image and likeness of God. That is why we oppose all threats to human life and dignity evident in contemporary society, including abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide and capital punishment.

We join with Pope Francis in noting that the right to life of the unborn “is the most fundamental right. This is not first a religious issue; it is a human rights issue.” (Pope Francis to American Catholic bishops, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Region IX, on Jan. 16, 2020).

As Pope Francis says in his 2021 World Day of Peace Message:

*The very concept of the person, which originated and developed in Christianity, fosters the pursuit of a fully human development. Person always signifies relationship, not individualism; it affirms inclusion, not exclusion, unique and inviolable dignity, not exploitation. Each human person is an end in himself or herself, and never simply a means to be valued only for his or her usefulness. Persons are created to live together in families, communities and societies, where all are equal in dignity. Human rights derive from this dignity, as do human duties, like the responsibility to welcome and assist the poor, the sick, the excluded, every one of our neighbors, near or far in space and time. (#8-9)*

We have rights and duties as women and men made in the image and likeness of God, and Easter affirms our responsibilities as people who have been liberated from the death grip of selfishness and sin.

Our Church also vigorously defends the idea that all creation is to be revered as the sacred instrument of God’s tender love and mercy. The air we breathe, the land we cultivate, the water we drink and the minerals we unearth as sources of energy and fuel are all precious in the sight of God. These are gifts to be treasured and used carefully for the common good. They are not to be exploited, wasted or discarded carelessly.

Quoting from his encyclical “*Laudato Si’*,” on Care for Our Common Home,” our Holy Father observes:

*The encyclical “Laudato Si’” is fully aware that all creation is interconnected. It also highlights our need to listen to the cry of the poor and, at the same time, to the cry of creation. Constant and attentive listening leads in turn to effective care for the Earth, our common home, and for our brothers and sisters in need. Here I would once again point out that “a sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be authentic if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings. Peace, justice and care for creation are three inherently connected questions, which cannot be separated in such a way as to be treated individually, lest we fall back into reductionism” (#15-16).*

Jesus’ death on the cross and his miraculous resurrection have restored life to its full dignity. No longer can the culture of death claim dominion over us. Life is triumphant, and Jesus, the Lord of Life, claims us as his own.

Because we celebrate life, during this Easter season and always, we insist on the dignity and human rights of all people regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political preferences, economic or social standing. We defend the civil rights of everyone. We reject all forms of hatred, prejudice and bias. We accept all people of good will, and we recognize every one—including people we dislike or disagree with—as sisters and brothers in the one family of God.

Life has the last word—always. Let us rejoice and be glad. Alleluia!

—Daniel Conway

Be Our Guest/Richard Doerflinger

## Confusions about blessings

“The Catholic Church has dealt a blow to LGBTQ worshippers hoping for a more liberal, progressive Church.”



So says NBC News about a recent statement by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

What was this terrible blow? The congregation, with Pope Francis’ approval, reaffirmed

that the Church does not “have the power” to bless same-sex unions—or any relationship involving sexual activity outside of marriage, “the indissoluble union of a man and a woman open in itself to the transmission of life.”

The Church cannot change its teaching for self-styled “liberals” or “conservatives,” as it must serve the designs of God found in Scripture and fully revealed by Christ.

The statement also recognized that same-sex relationships may have “positive elements” to be valued, although they exist “within the context of a union not ordered to the Creator’s plan.” It said the Church should welcome with respect and compassion people who have same-sex attraction, opposing all unjust discrimination.

Priests may even bless “individual persons with homosexual inclinations, who manifest the will to live in fidelity to the revealed plans of God proposed by Church teaching.” In fact, “God himself never ceases to bless each of his pilgrim people in this world,” because “we are more important to God than all of the sins that we can commit.”

In other words, God rejects sin but loves the sinner, and the Church must do likewise. Or as an accompanying commentary says, “the negative judgment on the blessing of unions of persons of the same sex does not imply a judgment on persons.”

All this was lost on NBC News—and on its guest Francis DeBernardo, executive director of New Ways Ministry. He had said in October that comments by Pope Francis on gay people would be a “tidal wave”

sweeping away the Church’s past teaching and practice. He now says that Francis has only approved the new statement under “pressure” from the Vatican, apparently ignoring who runs the Vatican.

What Francis had said, in a documentary, was: “Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God. . . . Nobody should be thrown out or made miserable over it.” Some decided to interpret him as saying that same-sex unions create families, but he was recognizing people’s need to keep receiving love and understanding from their own families.

That documentary also took out of context a position Francis has held since he was archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, when lawmakers were moving forward with same-sex marriage legislation: A law allowing “civil unions,” recognizing certain legal rights for people in nonmarital relationships, is preferable to a law confusing those relationships with marriage.

Then-Archbishop William J. Levada of San Francisco had taken a similar position shortly before Pope Benedict XVI named him to lead the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and made him a cardinal.

But Francis has also written that “there are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God’s plan for marriage and family” (“*Amoris Laetitia*,” #251)—perhaps the least pastoral-sounding quote in the new Vatican statement.

Some say LGBTQ people and those who love them will leave the Church because of its teaching. That would be a tragedy, especially if it arises from a false and cynical narrative by activists trying to divide the Church.

Catholics would be leaving a sanctuary of God’s mercy and forgiveness to face a secular culture with its own strict orthodoxy and punishments—including the blacklisting of books, careers and reputations, and no mercy at all.

(Richard Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.) †

## Letter to the Editor

### Catholic media are accurate, honest and trustworthy sources of news, reader says

As the Easter issue of *The Criterion*, the April 2 edition appropriately contains many articles proclaiming the joy of the Resurrection.

However, it was hard for me to feel much joy when I got to pages 8-9, which contained four articles from Catholic News Service (CNS): fear of continued social unrest for faith communities in Minnesota; a worsening humanitarian crisis at our southern border; a mass shooting in Colorado; and escalating political violence in Myanmar. I pray that our risen Lord will bring peace and healing to all those affected by these tragedies.

I was struck by the balanced reporting of facts and the sensitivity to the dignity of all persons involved in these articles, which stand in stark contrast to how these particular events have been portrayed by most other news sources (if even reported at all).

I suppose journalistic integrity has become so scarce in our ubiquitous “mainstream media” that I am genuinely surprised to see it anywhere.

So I thought I would take this opportunity to thank the staffs of CNS and *The Criterion* for remaining among the diminishingly few accurate, honest and trustworthy sources of national and global news.

Because of, not in spite of, their mandatory and explicit Catholic viewpoint, these organizations report information in a far more fair and honorable manner than any secular news agency is capable of, even if it tried. I can only pray that we all soon have happier news to report.

May the peace of Christ be with all of us.

Dr. Patrick Knerr  
Plainfield

## Letters Policy

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic

sense of courtesy and respect.

Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” *The Criterion*, 1400 N. Meridian Street, Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to [criterion@archindy.org](mailto:criterion@archindy.org). †



# Christ the Cornerstone

## Christ's death, resurrection, ultimate expressions of Divine Mercy

Happy Easter! The Lord is risen as he promised. Alleluia!

The holy season of Easter encourages us to place our hope in the risen Lord. He is with us even in the most difficult circumstances as the Lord of life who has conquered sin and death in order to set us free. His death and resurrection are the ultimate expressions of Divine Mercy. Christ died, and rose again, to forgive us and to save us from our sins.

The Second Sunday of Easter, which we celebrate this weekend, is also known as Divine Mercy Sunday. Mercy is a favorite theme of Pope Francis—and it was also emphasized by his predecessors, Pope St. John Paul II and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. The fact that God is merciful, as well as just, means that we who are sinners have hope. As we pray in Psalm 130, “If you take account of our sins, Lord, who would survive? But with you there is mercy and fullness of redemption” (Ps 130:3-4).

Mercy is made possible by great love. It is because God loves us so much that he sent his only Son to give his life for us. We are forgiven and redeemed by the blood of Christ. We

are liberated from slavery to sin and death because of the inexhaustible love of our triune God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) whose mercy is deeper than the ocean and whose forgiveness stretches further than the stars in the heavens.

Mercy is a gift that must be shared. As we see in the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 4:32-35), the first Christians responded to the mercy shown them by sharing generously with each other. “With great power the Apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the Apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need” (Acts 4:33-35).

Unity among us requires mercy—seeking forgiveness of our sins as well as forgiveness of the sins committed against us. This is the only way to achieve lasting peace. In the Gospel reading for this Sunday, our risen Lord makes the connection between forgiveness and peace when he says: “Peace be with you. As the Father

has sent me, so I send you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained’ ” (Jn 20:21-23).

Unless we are merciful toward others—even our enemies—we will be constantly consumed by resentment and anger, and we will not know peace. This is true for both individuals and for nations. Unless we can forgive those with whom we disagree (even dislike intensely), we cannot have unity or peace. This is why Jesus gave his Apostles the authority to forgive sins in his name. Because Christ’s resurrection has overcome the power of evil, we are free to cast off our fears and extend to others the peace that can only come through forgiveness of past wrongs.

In his historic visit to Iraq last month, Pope Francis forcefully reminded us that peace can never come through hostility and violence—especially in the name of religion. It can only come through forgiveness and the acknowledgment in love that we are all sisters and brothers made in the image and likeness of God, the face of mercy.

“The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. His mercy endures forever” (Ps 118:22). Let’s build a better world on the foundation of Christ whose love and mercy last forever. Let’s joyfully celebrate this Easter season confident that our Father will be merciful to us as we forgive those who sin against us.

St. Maria Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), a Polish sister of Our Lady of Mercy whose mystical visions of Jesus inspired the Divine Mercy devotion, prayed: “O my Jesus, despite the deep night that is all around me and the dark clouds which hide the horizon, I know that the sun never goes out. O Lord, though I cannot comprehend you and do not understand your ways, I nonetheless trust in your mercy.”

Divine Mercy overcomes all darkness. It allows the light of God’s grace to penetrate even the most hidden and shameful places in our hearts and in the world we live in.

With St. Faustina, and all the saints, let’s proclaim this fundamental truth: “Heaven and Earth may change, but God’s mercy will never be exhausted.” †



## Cristo, la piedra angular

### La muerte de Cristo y la resurrección: las máximas expresiones de la Divina Misericordia

¡Feliz Pascua de Resurrección! El Señor ha resucitado como lo prometió. ¡Aleluya!

El tiempo santo de la Pascua nos anima a depositar nuestra esperanza en el Señor Resucitado. Él está con nosotros incluso en las circunstancias más difíciles como el Señor de la Vida que ha vencido el pecado y la muerte para liberarnos. Su muerte y resurrección son las máximas expresiones de la Misericordia Divina. Cristo murió y resucitó para perdonarnos y salvarnos de nuestros pecados.

El segundo domingo de Pascua, que celebramos este fin de semana, se conoce también como el domingo de la Divina Misericordia. Este es uno de los temas favoritos del papa Francisco, y también sus predecesores, el papa san Juan Pablo II y el papa emérito Benedicto XVI hicieron énfasis en él. El hecho de que Dios sea misericordioso, además de justo, significa que los pecadores tenemos esperanza. Como rezamos en el Salmo 130: “Señor, si te fijaras en nuestros pecados, ¿quién podría sostenerse en tu presencia? Pero en ti hallamos perdón, para que seas reverenciado” (Sal 130:3-4).

La misericordia es posible gracias a un gran amor. Puesto que Dios nos ama tanto envió a su único Hijo a dar su vida por nosotros y por la sangre de Cristo hemos sido perdonados y

redimidos. Fuimos liberados de la esclavitud del pecado y de la muerte por el amor inagotable de nuestro Dios trino (Padre, Hijo y Espíritu Santo), cuya misericordia es más profunda que el océano y cuyo perdón se extiende más allá de las estrellas del cielo.

La misericordia es un don que se debe compartir. Como vemos en la primera lectura de los Hechos de los Apóstoles (He 4:32-35), la respuesta de los primeros cristianos a la misericordia que se les mostró fue compartir generosamente con los demás. “Y los apóstoles daban un testimonio poderoso de la resurrección del Señor Jesús, y la gracia de Dios sobreabundaba en todos ellos. Y no había entre ellos ningún necesitado, porque todos los que poseían terrenos o casas, los vendían, y el dinero de lo vendido lo llevaban y lo ponían en manos de los apóstoles, y éste era repartido según las necesidades de cada uno” (He 4:33-35).

La unidad entre nosotros exige misericordia: buscar el perdón de nuestros pecados, así como el perdón de los pecados cometidos contra nosotros; es el único camino hacia la paz duradera. En la lectura del Evangelio de este domingo, nuestro Señor resucitado hace la conexión entre el perdón y la paz cuando dice:

“La paz sea con ustedes. Así como el Padre me envió, también yo los envío

a ustedes.’ Y habiendo dicho esto, sopló y les dijo: ‘Reciban el Espíritu Santo. A quienes ustedes perdonen los pecados, les serán perdonados; y a quienes no se los perdonen, no les serán perdonados’ ” (Jn 20:21-23).

Si no somos misericordiosos con los demás—incluso con nuestros enemigos—nos consumirá constantemente el resentimiento y la ira, y no conoceremos la paz. Esto es cierto tanto para nosotros como para las personas, así como para los países. Si no somos capaces de perdonar a aquellos con los que no estamos de acuerdo (incluso si nos desagradan intensamente), no podremos tener unidad ni paz. Por eso Jesús dio a sus Apóstoles la autoridad de perdonar los pecados en su nombre. Dado que la resurrección de Cristo ha vencido el poder del mal, somos libres de despojarnos de nuestros miedos y extender a los demás la paz que solo puede venir a través del perdón de los errores del pasado.

En su histórica visita a Irak el mes pasado, el papa Francisco nos recordó con contundencia que la paz nunca puede llegar a través de la hostilidad y la violencia, especialmente en nombre de la religión. Solo a través del perdón y el reconocimiento en el amor de que todos somos hermanas y hermanos hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios,

el Rostro de la Misericordia, podremos alcanzar la paz.

“La piedra que los constructores rechazaron, ha llegado a ser la piedra angular. Su misericordia permanece para siempre” (Sal 118:22, 29). Construyamos un mundo mejor sobre los cimientos de Cristo, cuyo amor y misericordia son eternos. Celebremos con alegría este tiempo de Pascua confiando en que nuestro Padre será misericordioso con nosotros al perdonar a los que pecan contra nosotros.

Santa María Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), hermana polaca de Nuestra Señora de la Merced, cuyas visiones místicas de Jesús inspiraron la devoción de la Divina Misericordia, rezaba: “Oh, Jesús mío, a pesar de la profunda noche que me rodea y de las oscuras nubes que ocultan el horizonte, sé que el sol nunca se apaga. Oh, Señor, aunque no pueda comprenderte y no entienda tus caminos, confío en tu misericordia.”

La Divina Misericordia vence todas las tinieblas ya que por ella, la luz de la gracia de Dios penetra incluso en los lugares más ocultos y vergonzosos de nuestro corazón y del mundo en que vivimos.

Con santa Faustina, y con todos los santos, proclamemos esta verdad fundamental: “El cielo y la tierra pueden cambiar, pero la misericordia de Dios nunca se agotará.” †

# Events Calendar

For a list of events for the next four weeks as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/events](http://www.archindy.org/events).

## April 15

St. Joseph Church, 1401 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **Third Thursday Adoration**, interceding for women experiencing crisis pregnancy, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with Mass at 5:45 p.m.

Our Lady of Peace Cemetery and Mausoleum, 9001 Haverstick Road, Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-574-8898 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

## April 15, 22, 29, May 6

**The Third Option virtual marriage crisis/enrichment class**, 7-8 p.m., series offered most Thursdays through May 20, no registration needed, free. Upcoming topics: April 15, "Handling Anger Constructively;" April 22, "Speaking the Truth in Love;" April 29, "How to Fight Fair and Conflict Resolution;" May 6, "Feelings and the Hurt Spiral." Go to [carmelthirdoption.org/web](http://carmelthirdoption.org/web), click on link at top of page. Information: [carmelthirdoption.org/web](http://carmelthirdoption.org/web), or Keith Ingram, [kingram@aicinvest.com](mailto:kingram@aicinvest.com) or 317-324-8446.

**Bible Study: St. Paul's Letter to the Romans**, via Zoom, sponsored by St. Michael Parish, Greenfield, 1-2:30 p.m., series of stand-alone sessions offered Thursdays through May 20, led by graduates of Guadalupe Bible College, free. Information and registration: Darlene Davis, [ljdarlene@gmail.com](mailto:ljdarlene@gmail.com) or 317-498-2242.

## April 16-17

**Discernment virtual retreat: "Living the Mission of God" on Zoom**, Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Fri. 7-9 p.m., Sat. 2-7 p.m., for women ages 18-42 exploring religious life, free. Register online: [cutt.ly/ComeSeeRetreat](http://cutt.ly/ComeSeeRetreat). Information: Sister Joni Luna at 361-500-9505 or [jluna@spsmw.org](mailto:jluna@spsmw.org).

Mount St. Francis gym and lower level chapel, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Terry's Treasure Yard Sale**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: [cutt.ly/TerrysTreasures](http://cutt.ly/TerrysTreasures), 812-923-8817.

## April 17-May 1 (virtual), April 24 (in person)

**Indianapolis St. Vincent de Paul "Love Your Neighbor 5k Run/Walk,"** run or walk 5K with two options—**Virtual:** April 17-May 1 anytime/anywhere. **In-person:** April 24, 9 a.m., White River State Park, 801 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, paved trail. Race packet for in-person participants includes MyLaps Chip Timing for live results, pace breakdown and placing. Cost: ages 23 and older \$35, or \$30 with no T-shirt; students ages 6-22 \$20, or \$15 with no T-shirt. Registration and information: [www.svdindy.org/neighbor](http://www.svdindy.org/neighbor). Questions: [dsweeney@svdindy.org](mailto:dsweeney@svdindy.org) or 317-924-5769, ext. 238.

## April 21

Calvary Mausoleum

Chapel, 435 W. Troy Ave., Indianapolis. **Monthly Mass**, 2 p.m. Information: 317-784-4439 or [www.catholiccemeteries.cc](http://www.catholiccemeteries.cc).

## April 24

**Celebration Roncalli**, via Zoom, 6:30-8 p.m., fundraiser and silent auction benefitting Roncalli High School, silent auction site open for bidding April 19: [www.roncalli.org/celebration](http://www.roncalli.org/celebration), raffle for \$10,000, free. Information and registration: 317-787-8277, [jendris@roncalli.com](mailto:jendris@roncalli.com), [www.roncalli.org/celebration](http://www.roncalli.org/celebration).

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Faithful Citizens Rosary Walk**, 10:45-11:45 a.m., meet in front of church. Information: [faithful.citizens2016@gmail.com](mailto:faithful.citizens2016@gmail.com).

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **2nd Annual Free Tree Giveaway**, sponsored by the Franciscan Earth Care Initiative of the Province or Our Lady of Consolation, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., two free seedlings per car, tree varieties include white oak, sycamore and river birch. Information: Debbie Nichols, [d.nichols@franciscansusa.org](mailto:d.nichols@franciscansusa.org) or 502-500-3953.

**Virtual Dialogue on Intercultural Competency**, via Zoom, monthly series sponsored by archdiocesan Black Catholic Ministry,

10 a.m., "Importance of Africentric Catholic catechesis," Dr. Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, director of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans, facilitating, freewill offering. Registration: [cutt.ly/VDIC](http://cutt.ly/VDIC). Information: Pearllette Springer, [pspringer@archindy.org](mailto:pspringer@archindy.org) or 317-236-1474.

## April 25

The Willows Event Center, 6729 Westfield Blvd., Indianapolis. **Light in the City Annual Dinner**, benefitting Lumen Christi Catholic School, 5-9 p.m., silent auction, bourbon pull, dancing, COVID-19 safety protocols observed, \$100 per person or \$600 for table of six. Tickets: [lumenchristi.home.qtego.net](http://lumenchristi.home.qtego.net). Information: Bob Collins, 317-632-3174 or [bcollins@lumenchristischool.org](mailto:bcollins@lumenchristischool.org).

## May 5

MCL Cafeteria, 5520 Castleton Corner Lane, Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, 5:30 p.m., Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles—separated, widowed or divorced—age 50 and older, new members welcome, also call about regular Friday night dinner events. Information: 317-796-8605 or 317-243-0777.

## May 7

Women's Care Center, 4901 W. 86th St., Indianapolis. **First Friday Mass**, 5 p.m., Fr. James Farrell, celebrant, optional tour of center to follow. Information: 317-829-6800, [www.womenscarecenter.org](http://www.womenscarecenter.org).

Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood. **First Friday bilingual celebration of**

**the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**, Mass, 5:45 p.m., exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, following Mass until 9 p.m., sacrament of reconciliation available. Information: 317-750-7309, [msross1@hotmail.com](mailto:msross1@hotmail.com).

## May 8

St. John Paul II Parish, St. Paul Chapel, 216 Schellers Ave., Sellersburg. **First Saturday Marian Devotion**, 8 a.m. rosary, meditation, prayer; 8:30 a.m. Mass with confessions prior. Information: 812-246-3522.

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd., Brookville. **First Saturday Marian Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, devotional prayers, rosary, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462. †

## Retreats and Programs

For a complete list of retreats as reported to The Criterion, log on to [www.archindy.org/retreats](http://www.archindy.org/retreats).

## April 21

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Pilgrimage at the Mount**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen, presenter, \$50 includes lunch. Registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats) or 812-923-8817.

## April 20, 27

Benedict Inn Retreat & Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Benedictine Spirituality**, 7-8:30 p.m., series of stand-alone sessions, April 20 presenter Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner, April 27 presenter Benedictine Sister Antoinette Purcell, \$25 per session. Registration: [www.benedictinn.org/programs](http://www.benedictinn.org/programs). Information: [benedictinn@benedictinn.org](mailto:benedictinn@benedictinn.org), 317-788-7581.

## April 21-June 2

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Plein Air Classes: Painting the Springtime Landscape**, Wednesdays 9:30-1:30 a.m. or 5-7 p.m., learn outdoor painting techniques from Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen, open to all levels, bring paints, canvases and brushes; chairs, easels and drawing tables provided, \$25 per session. Registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats) or 812-923-8817.

## April 24

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Wisdom of the Second Half of Life**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Judy Ribar presenter, \$50, additional \$75 for overnight and one meal. Registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats) or 812-923-8817.

## April 30

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **Painting with Padre**, last Friday monthly through May, doors open 5:30 p.m., painting instruction from Conventual Franciscan Father Vincent Petersen 6-9 p.m., subject matter changes monthly, cheese and light snacks, bring your own beverage, \$40 per session. Registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats) or 812-923-8817.

## April 30-May 2

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat Center, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Tobit Marriage Preparation Weekend**, 7 p.m. Fri.-11:45 a.m. Sun., for engaged couples only, includes materials, meals, snacks, presentations and separate overnight accommodations, \$298 per couple. Registration: [cutt.ly/TOBITRetreat](http://cutt.ly/TOBITRetreat) or 317-545-7681, must also complete "Tobit Required Info Sheet"

at [cutt.ly/TOBITForm](http://cutt.ly/TOBITForm) and email to [jbarger@archindy.org](mailto:jbarger@archindy.org). Information on program: [cutt.ly/fatimaretreats](http://cutt.ly/fatimaretreats), 317-545-7681 x. 106 or [cmcsweeney@archindy.org](mailto:cmcsweeney@archindy.org).

## May 7-8

Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Migratory Birds at the Mount**, Fri. 5-9 p.m., live presentation with Leslie Grow from Dwight Chamberlain Raptor Center at Hardy Lake; Sat. 7 a.m.-noon, two guided birdwatching hikes with local naturalist Rod Goforth, \$120, private room, two meals, presentations and guided hikes. Saturday only option \$25, includes breakfast, presentation and guided hikes. Registration: [cutt.ly/msf-birds](http://cutt.ly/msf-birds) or 812-923-8817.

## May 8

Mount Saint Francis Center for Spirituality, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mt. St. Francis. **A Day with Mary**, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Judy Ribar presenter, \$50 includes box lunch. Registration: [mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats](http://mountsaintfrancis.org/retreats) or 812-923-8817.

Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Dr., Mount St. Francis. **Guided Bird Hikes at the Mount**, 7 a.m.-noon, breakfast, presentation and two guided hikes led by local naturalist Rod Goforth, \$25. Registration: [cutt.ly/msf-birds](http://cutt.ly/msf-birds) or 812-923-8817. †

## Wedding ANNIVERSARIES

### LESTER AND JOEANN (BARBOUR) BRUNS



**LESTER AND JOEANN (BARBOUR) BRUNS**, members of St. Michael Parish in Brookville, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary on April 14.

The couple was married in St. Mary Church in Oxford, Ohio, on April 14, 1956.

They have six children: Denise Busony, Debbie Moore, Diane Pennington, Donna, Doug and the late Ricky Bruns.

The couple also has nine grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. †

### LARRY AND RITA (FISHER) PERSINGER



**LARRY AND RITA (FISHER) PERSINGER**, members of Annunciation Parish in Brazil, will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on April 14.

The couple was married in St. Patrick Church in Terre Haute on April 14, 1961.

They have four children: Rita Rhoads, Anne Wilkey, Anita and Michael Persinger.

The couple also has 13 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. †

### BILL AND JANE (GASKILL) BOUCHER



**BILL AND JANE (GASKILL) BOUCHER**, members of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on April 2.

The couple was married in Annunciation Church in Brazil on April 2, 1971.

They have two children: Laura Shenfeld and William Boucher.

The couple also has two grandchildren. †

Announcements for couples celebrating 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 or more years of marriage are accepted. Go to [bit.ly/2M4MQms](http://bit.ly/2M4MQms) or call 317-236-1585.



# The Face of Mercy

By Daniel Conway



## Pope's exhortation reminds us of good news of Easter joy

*“Jesus wants us to touch human misery, to touch the suffering flesh of others. In our dealings with the world, we are told to give reasons for our hope, but not as an enemy who critiques and condemns. Only the person who feels happiness in seeking the good of others, in desiring their happiness, can be a missionary”* (“*Evangelii Gaudium*,” “The Joy of the Gospel,” #270–271).

Pope Francis has been writing about hope and joy from the beginning of his pontificate. In fact, his first apostolic exhortation, “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (“The Joy of the Gospel”), which was issued on Nov. 24, 2013, is wholly dedicated to the good news that the resurrection of the Lord has freed us from the darkness of sin and death.

“The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus,” the pope writes. “I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come” (#1). We need this good news more than ever now after a year of pandemic, social unrest and economic hardship!

“*Evangelii Gaudium*” is a heartfelt appeal to bring Christ’s love to others, to be permanently in a state of mission, conquering the great danger in today’s world of individualist desolation and anguish. Repeatedly the Holy Father has warned that selfish indifference is an evil far more destructive than any pandemic.

For Pope Francis, the hope and joy of Easter are the only solution to the “desolation and anguish” that come from a world-weary sense of fatalism and despair (#2). The Church itself is tempted to settle into a comfortable acceptance of the status quo. This is unacceptable!

The Easter miracle should compel all baptized Christians to speak out with joyful hearts, to proclaim the transformation of the world and all it contains, and to act with heroism and hope to comfort us with the consolation of the risen Christ, and to unsettle us with the discomfort of the one who came not to bring peace but the sword (Mt 10:34).

In the light of Easter joy, Pope Francis warns all of us (himself included) against three temptations: individualism, a crisis of identity and a cooling of fervor. The pope believes the greatest threat of all

is “the gray pragmatism of the daily life of the Church, in which all appears to proceed normally, while in reality the faith is wearing down” (#83). He warns against defeatism, urging Christians to be signs of hope, bringing about a “revolution of tenderness,” vanquishing the “spiritual worldliness” that consists of “seeking not the Lord’s glory but human glory and well-being” (#88, #93).

The Church teaches that only one sin is unforgivable: the sin against hope (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2091). This is because sins against hope contradict the very meaning of Christian life. They deny the Easter mystery and its power to save us all, regardless of who we are or what we have done.

“*Evangelii Gaudium*” calls baptized Christians to become “spirit-filled evangelizers” who are “fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit,” and who have “the courage to proclaim with boldness the newness of the Gospel in every time and place, even when it meets with opposition” (#259).

In response to the good news of Easter, Pope Francis urges us to be evangelizers who pray and work in the knowledge that our “mission is at once

a passion for Jesus and a passion for his people” (#268). How passionate are we, really, about sharing the risen Christ with others? Are we enthusiastic or just lukewarm?

The pope urges us not to be discouraged because of failure or scarce results, since “fruitfulness is often invisible, elusive and unquantifiable” (#279). The boldness that Peter and the disciples displayed after they had received the Holy Spirit is what is demanded of us today.

The Church has experienced many failures (much of it self-imposed) in its 2,000-year history, but the presence of the Holy Spirit helps to overcome our human weaknesses and to make genuine growth in holiness and charity a real possibility in every circumstance no matter how challenging.

Easter is the season of hope and joy. Let’s not be afraid to proclaim with boldness our profound belief that the suffering and despair of the Lord’s passion have been overcome by the saving grace of Love. Alleluia!

(Daniel Conway is a member of The Criterion’s editorial committee.) †

“Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God.”

—Pope Francis, “*Misericordiae Vultus*” (“The Face of Mercy”)



“Jesús de Nazaret con su palabra, con sus gestos y con toda su persona revela la misericordia de Dios.”

—Papa Francisco, “*Misericordiae Vultus*” (“El rostro de la misericordia”)

**El rostro de la misericordia/Daniel Conway**

## La exhortación del papa nos recuerda la buena nueva de la alegría pascual

*“Jesús quiere que toquemos la miseria humana toquemos la carne sufriendo de los demás. En nuestra relación con el mundo, se nos invita a dar razón de nuestra esperanza, pero no como enemigos que señalan y condenan. [...] Sólo puede ser misionero alguien que se sienta bien buscando el bien de los demás, deseando la felicidad de los otros”* (“*La alegría del Evangelio*,” #270).

Desde el inicio de su pontificado, el papa Francisco ha escrito sobre la esperanza y la alegría. De hecho, su primera exhortación apostólica, titulada “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (“*La alegría del Evangelio*”) y publicada el 24 de noviembre de 2013, trata íntegramente sobre la buena nueva de que la resurrección del Señor nos ha librado de la oscuridad del pecado y la muerte.

El papa nos dice que “la alegría del Evangelio llena el corazón y la vida entera de los que se encuentran con Jesús.” En esta Exhortación quiero dirigirme a los fieles cristianos para invitarlos a una nueva etapa evangelizadora marcada por esa alegría, e indicar caminos para la marcha de la Iglesia en los próximos años” (#1). Necesitamos esta buena noticia más que nunca, después de un año de pandemia, malestar social y dificultades económicas.

La alegría del Evangelio es un llamado sincero a llevar el amor de Cristo al prójimo, a vivir permanentemente en un estado misionero para conquistar el grave peligro de la desolación y la angustia individualista aqueja a la modernidad. En repetidas ocasiones el Santo Padre ha advertido que la indiferencia egoísta es un mal mucho más destructivo que cualquier pandemia.

Para el papa Francisco, la esperanza y la alegría del Evangelio son la única solución ante la “desolación y la angustia” que provienen de la percepción mundana de fatalismo y desesperación (#2). La propia Iglesia está tentada a acoplarse a la comodidad que ofrece la aceptación del *status quo*. ¡Esto es inaceptable!

El milagro pascual debería impulsar a todos los cristianos bautizados a alzar su voz con corazones rebosantes de alegría, a proclamar la transformación del mundo y todo lo que encierra, y a actuar con heroísmo y esperanza para reconfortarnos con el consuelo de Cristo resucitado, y para revolver lo que se ha asentado con la incomodidad que infunde aquel que no vino a traer paz sino espada (Mt 10:34).

A la luz de la alegría de la Pascua, el papa Francisco nos previene a todos (incluso a sí mismo) de tres tentaciones: el individualismo, la crisis de identidad y el enfriamiento del fervor. El papa

considera que la mayor amenaza es “el gris pragmatismo de la vida cotidiana de la Iglesia en el cual aparentemente todo procede con normalidad, pero en realidad la fe se va desgastando” (#83). Nos advierte contra el derrotismo y exhorta a los cristianos a ser símbolos de esperanza que generen una «revolución de la ternura» y a desterrar la “mundanidad espiritual” que busca “en lugar de la gloria del Señor, la gloria humana y el bienestar personal” (#88, #93).

La Iglesia nos enseña que solo existe un tipo de pecado imperdonable: los pecados contra la esperanza (*Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*, #2091). Esto se debe a que los pecados contra la esperanza contradicen el propio significado de la vida cristiana al negar el misterio pascual y su poder redentor sobre nosotros, independientemente de quiénes seamos y qué hayamos hecho.

“*La alegría del Evangelio*” es un llamado a los cristianos para que se conviertan en “evangelizadores con Espíritu” que “se abren sin temor a la acción del Espíritu Santo” y que tengan “la fuerza para anunciar la novedad del Evangelio con audacia, en voz alta y en todo tiempo y lugar, incluso a contracorriente” (#259).

En respuesta a la buena nueva de la Pascua, el papa Francisco anima vehementemente a los evangelizadores a que

recen y trabajen sobre la premisa de que nuestra “misión es una pasión por Jesús pero, al mismo tiempo, una pasión por su pueblo” (#268). ¿Hasta qué punto nos apasiona compartir a Cristo resucitado con los demás? ¿Estamos entusiasmados o somos tibios?

El papa nos alienta a que no nos desanimemos ante el fracaso o la ausencia de resultados puesto que “tal fecundidad es muchas veces invisible, inaferrable, no puede ser contabilizada” (#279). La audacia que Pedro y los discípulos mostraron después de que habían recibido el Espíritu Santo es lo que se exige de nosotros hoy.

La Iglesia ha experimentado muchos fracasos (muchos de ellos autoimpuestos) en sus 2,000 años de historia, pero la presencia del Espíritu Santo ayuda a superar nuestras debilidades humanas y a hacer que el crecimiento genuino en la santidad y la caridad sea una posibilidad real en cualquier circunstancia, por desafiante que sea.

La Pascua es la temporada de la esperanza y la alegría. No temamos proclamar nuestra profunda convicción de que la gracia salvadora del Amor ha vencido el sufrimiento y la desesperación de la pasión del Señor. ¡Aleluya!

(Daniel Conway es integrante del comité editorial de The Criterion.) †

# El consejo de una madre y los ojos de la fe ayudan a un joven adulto a encontrar su camino hacia Dios

(Nota del editor: En esta serie, The Criterion presenta a jóvenes adultos que han encontrado un hogar en la Iglesia y se esfuerzan por vivir su fe en la vida cotidiana.)

Por John Shaughnessy

Hay momentos entre una madre y un hijo que pueden parecer ordinarios a ojos de los demás, pero que son especiales e incluso sagrados para las dos personas que los comparten.

Para Saúl Llacsca, de 34 años, uno de esos momentos llegó cuando tenía 7 años y marcó su vida desde entonces, especialmente en las situaciones más difíciles que ha tenido que soportar.

Al recordar su crianza en Bolivia, Llacsca recuerda ese momento sagrado como parte de una época en la que, pese a que sus padres eran “muy pobres,” hacían todo lo posible para ofrecer oportunidades a sus ocho hijos y ayudarlos a entender lo que es más importante en la vida.

“Creo que todo se inicia en la familia,” afirma. “Un día, cuando tenía 7 años, mi madre me llevó a la iglesia y me dijo que cuando sientas que algo en tu vida se derrumba, solo tienes que ir a la iglesia y hablar con Dios.” Me dijo: “Él está aquí. No tienes que venir con mamá. Puedes venir tú solo.

“Y eso hice. Pasó a ser una rutina en mi vida. Todos los viernes, después de la escuela, iba a la iglesia: ‘Oye, Jesús, ¿cómo estás? ¿Qué tal va tu día?’ Le hablaba de lo que estaba pasando en mi vida como a un amigo. Entonces empecé a tener una relación con él, sentía que podía confiarle todo.”

Se apoyó especialmente en esa relación cuando tenía 23 años, en 2010, año en que murió su padre, seguido nueve meses después por la muerte de su madre.

Al hablar de ese año, a Llacsca, el coordinador de la pastoral hispana de la Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis, se le desbordan las emociones. Con los ojos llenos de lágrimas, coge un pañuelo de papel y luego otro; a continuación, comparte algo sorprendente.

## Un giro drástico

“No lloro por perder a mis padres. Hicieron una labor estupenda. Fueron personas increíbles,” dice. “Lloro de felicidad. Lloro más por lo que vino después.

“Durante ese año, es curioso que nunca

me sentí solo, aunque la ausencia de mis padres fuera tan dolorosa. Dios y la Madre Iglesia nunca me dejaron caminar en soledad. Es como si me hubiera dicho, ‘tú perdiste a tus padres, pero yo estoy aquí. Nunca dejaré que te quedes huérfano. Si tus padres no están, yo estoy aquí para cuidarte’. La Iglesia me enseñó que iba a cuidarme de formas que nunca imaginé. Esto es la fe para mí: confiar en Dios ante cualquier adversidad.”

El camino de Llacsca hacia ese punto de fe y confianza en Dios dio un giro drástico en 2011.

Para entonces, se había graduado de la universidad y de la facultad de Derecho en Bolivia, y su plan de vida incluía mudarse a Chicago para asistir a una escuela para poder dominar el idioma inglés. Luego usaría esa habilidad para volver a trabajar en el bufete de su hermano en Bolivia y ayudar a expandir el negocio familiar en el ámbito del derecho internacional.

Después de compartir esos detalles, Llacsca sonríe. Luego su sonrisa se convierte en una carcajada cuando dice: “Dios tenía otro plan.”

Mientras vivía en Chicago, Llacsca comenzó a asistir a la misa diaria en una iglesia donde conoció a algunos sacerdotes que eran latinos.

“Uno de ellos me dijo que quería presentarme a un sacerdote de la Arquidiócesis de Nueva York,” recuerda. “Era el rector del seminario de allí. Hablamos por teléfono seis o siete veces. Me preguntó si quería ir a Nueva York a hacer un retiro. Le dije: ‘¿Por qué no?’

“Tenía un vacío en mi vida, y ese vacío era infinito. Podrías echar lo que quisieras en ese agujero: dinero, mujeres, tu carrera. Pero es infinito. Nadie va a llenar ese agujero. Entonces empecé a darme cuenta de que si ese agujero era infinito, necesitaba algo infinito para llenarlo. Y eso es Jesús.”

Cuando Llacsca terminó el retiro, el rector lo invitó a ingresar en el seminario al mes siguiente. Llacsca lo consultó con su familia, y le dijeron que siguiera su corazón. Lo hizo. Y entró en el seminario.

## Un camino marcado por el propósito y el dolor, hacia la esperanza del cielo

“Nunca me había sentido así en la vida,” recuerda. “Siento que tengo un propósito en la vida. Siento que puedo hacer algo. Mi vocación era servir a mi pueblo. Me sentía bien por conocerlo. Tener una relación. Hablando con él

todos los días.”

Sin embargo, tras seis años de formación para ser sacerdote, tomó la difícil decisión de dejar el seminario.

“En ese momento, no sabía qué iba a hacer,” dice. “Volví a Chicago para estar con la familia. Fue una época muy dura. Esos seis años me cambiaron la vida. Antes era salvaje. Encontré un propósito en mi vida. Hasta hoy, sigo haciendo mis oraciones.”

También se ha mantenido centrado en su relación con Dios.

“No tienes que ser sacerdote para servir a Dios,” dice. “Puedes ser abogado, puedes ser enfermero, puedes ser médico, puedes ser lo que quieras, pero también puedes servir a Dios al mismo tiempo.”

En 2017, Llacsca se trasladó a Indianápolis para servir como coordinador del ministerio hispano de la arquidiócesis. Durante sus casi cuatro años en ese puesto, su principal objetivo ha sido “acercar a la gente a Dios.” También se esfuerza por que los latinos “compartan nuestros valores y nuestra fe para que podamos hacer una Iglesia mejor, más acogedora e integrada, una Iglesia con diversidad.”

Una de sus experiencias más memorables ha sido ayudar a organizar un campamento para unas 230 familias hispanas, llevándolas a la naturaleza durante dos días para centrarse en su relación con Dios. Celebraron la misa, se confesaron, compartieron historias de fe, todo con la esperanza de construir una comunidad que mantuviera a Cristo como el centro de sus vidas.

“Necesitamos esa comunidad. La comunidad es donde está Dios,” dice.

“A la gente le encantó ese campamento. Esa ardua labor dio sus frutos, según las cartas que recibimos. Eran cartas de afirmación. Cuando llegue al cielo, llevaré esas cartas conmigo. Le diré a Dios: ‘Esto es lo que hice por ti.’ Creo que he transformado vidas. Eso es lo que me hace feliz. Ahí es donde encuentro la motivación para mi vida.”

## La esperanza de una generación, la promesa de Dios

Llacsca también cree que los jóvenes adultos de su generación tienen el potencial de cambiar vidas al entablar una relación con Cristo y a través de su participación en la Iglesia.

“Los jóvenes adultos son personas vibrantes, inteligentes y apasionadas. Necesitamos su ayuda, y Dios los



Saul Llacsca habla durante un evento. (Foto por Natalie Hoefler)

necesita”, dice. “[Sin embargo] a veces debilitamos nuestra fe al perder nuestro enfoque en Cristo. Muchas veces, dejamos que las cosas externas afecten nuestra relación con Dios.

“Como joven adulto, compruebo que mi fe tiene altibajos. Hay momentos en los que miro más intencionadamente a Dios, y otras veces dejo que las rutinas diarias me alejen de Él. En esos momentos, confiamos más en nosotros mismos que en Dios. Simplemente tenemos que entregarnos a Él, como hizo Jesús.”

Llacsca ha aprendido que su propia paz y propósito siempre ha llegado—especialmente en los momentos difíciles—cuando ha puesto su confianza en Dios.

“Estoy agradecido por todos los momentos difíciles que Dios me ha dado. Cuando miro algunas situaciones de mi vida con los ojos de un ser humano, me parece que es terrible, que es un desastre. Sin embargo, cuando los miro con los ojos de la fe, todo tiene un propósito.

“Me ayudaron a conectar con Dios, a tener historias que compartir con mi gente.

“¿Dónde vas a conocer a Dios? En la adversidad. Dios te empuja porque sabe que puedes hacer cosas maravillosas. Si te arriesgas por Dios, Él te mostrará tus virtudes, tus dones. Tenemos que servir al pueblo de Dios con nuestros talentos, dones y santidad.” †

## LLACSA

continued from page 1

becomes a laugh as he says, “God had another plan.”

While living in Chicago, Llacsca began attending daily Mass at a church where he became acquainted with a few priests who were Latinos.

“One of them said he wanted to introduce me to a priest in the Archdiocese of New York,” he recalls. “He was the rector of the seminary there. We talked on the phone six, seven times. He asked if I wanted to come to New York for a retreat. I said, ‘Why not?’

“I had a hole in my life, and that hole is infinite. You can throw whatever you want into that hole—money, women, your career. But it’s infinite. Nobody is going to fill that hole. Then I started realizing if that hole is infinite, you need something infinite to fill it. And that is Jesus.”

After Llacsca finished the retreat, the rector invited him to enter the seminary the next month. Llacsca checked with his family, and they told him to follow his heart. He did, to the seminary.

## A path marked by purpose and pain, toward the hope of heaven

“I never felt like this in my life,” he recalls. “I feel like I have a purpose in my life. I feel like I can do something. My vocation was to serve my people. I was feeling good because of knowing [Christ]. Having a relationship. Talking to him every day.”

Yet after six years of formation to become a priest, he made the difficult decision to leave the seminary.

“At that point, I didn’t know what I was going to do,” he says. “I went back to Chicago to be with family. It was really a tough time. Those six years changed my life. I was wild before. I found a purpose in my life. To this day, I keep doing my prayers.”

He’s also kept his focus on his relationship with God. “You don’t have to be a priest to serve God,” he says. “You can be a lawyer, you can be a nurse, you can be a doctor, you can be whatever you want, but you can also serve God at the same time.”

In 2017, Llacsca moved to Indianapolis to serve as the coordinator of Hispanic ministry for the archdiocese. During his nearly four years in that role, his main goal has been “to bring people closer to God.” He also strives to have Latinos “share our values and faith so that we can make the Church better, more welcoming, integrated—one Church with diversity.”

One of his most memorable experiences has been helping to organize a camp for about 230 Hispanic families, taking them into nature for two days to focus on their relationship with God. Mass was celebrated, confessions were heard, stories of faith were shared—all in the hope of building a community that would keep Christ as the focus of their lives.

“We need that community. The community is where God is,” he says.

“People were happy about that camp. All that hard work paid off because of the letters we got. They were letters of affirmation. When I get to heaven, I’m going to bring those letters with me. I’ll say to God, ‘This is what I did for you.’ I think I’ve changed lives. That’s what makes me happy. That’s where I find motivation for my life.”

## The hope of a generation, the promise of God

Llacsca also believes the young adults of his generation have the potential to change lives—by embracing a relationship with Christ and through their involvement in the Church.

“Young adults are vibrant, intelligent and passionate people. We need their help, and God needs them,” he says. “[Yet] we sometimes weaken our faith by losing our focus on Christ. Many times, we let external things affect our relationship with God.

“As a young adult, I experience that my faith has ups and downs. There are times that I look more intentionally to God, and sometimes I let the daily routines keep me away from him. In those moments, we trust more in ourselves than in God. We just need to abandon ourselves to him, as Jesus did.”

Llacsca has learned that his own peace and purpose have always come—especially during the tough times—when he has placed his trust in God.

“I’m thankful for all the hard times God has given me. When I look at some moments in my life with the eyes of a human, it seems it’s really bad, that it’s a disaster. Yet when I look at them with the eyes of faith, everything has a purpose. They helped me to connect with God, to have stories to share with my people.

“Where are you going to know God? In adversity. God pushes you because he knows you can do wonderful things. If you risk for God, he will show you your virtues, your gifts. We need to serve God’s people with our talents, gifts and holiness.” †

# The gifts of parents bring joy to children during pandemic

(Editor's note: As part of our coverage of the ongoing influence that the coronavirus pandemic is having on the faith lives of people, The Criterion invited our readers to share their experiences.)

Fourth in a series

By John Shaughnessy

Like most parents with grown children, Joan and Larry Johnson always look forward to the special times when everyone in their family is together.

And similar to many older parents during the COVID-19 pandemic, their hopes of getting everyone together in-person in the past year were dashed because of fears of spreading the coronavirus.

Not wanting to give up on that connection completely, the couple turned to their faith for a different kind of family reunion.

"My parents found a way to bring our family together in a very prayerful, comforting way," says Julie Ross, their daughter and a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis, the same parish as her parents.

"Mom and Dad have prayed the rosary daily for several years. They decided in October of 2020 to share a Zoom link with their seven daughters, inviting each of us to join them in praying the rosary daily."

The experience has brought to life the adage, "The family that prays together, stays together."

"What an experience this has been, lifting our prayers to Mary, hearing about all of the kids and grandkids, sharing our blessings and trials during this pandemic," Ross says. "What a comfort it has been, knowing that every evening we can join with each other, sharing prayers of petition and thanksgiving."

"Whether it be praying for the many friends who have suffered from COVID or giving thanks for a job granted to a nervous grandchild, we know that this time of prayer together is there for us. Sometimes we get one-on-one time with Mom and Dad, when we are the only one able to 'Zoom in' that evening. At other times, the screen is

crowded with eight squares lighting up as we all talk at once."

The evening rosary sessions begin with a ritual that is special to the couple. Before starting the Zoom rosary, Joan Johnson often says to her husband, "Check to see if the bird is there." When he returns with a "yes" or a "no", the rosary starts.

Ross didn't understand that ritual until a few weeks ago when she and her family were able to visit her recently vaccinated parents in their home for the first time since the beginning of the COVID restrictions.

"My family stayed and prayed the rosary on the Zoom call with them that evening," Ross recalls. "Before starting the rosary, Dad said, 'Check to see if the cardinal is there.' Sure enough, perched under the porch roof was the most perfect cardinal, peaceful and beautifully serene."

The couple is among the many people who believe that the appearance of a cardinal represents a loved one who has died and is making a connection from heaven.

"I finally got what Mom and Dad were saying without saying it," Ross notes. "Their second daughter—our sister Lynn who passed away seven years ago—often joins us for our family rosary."

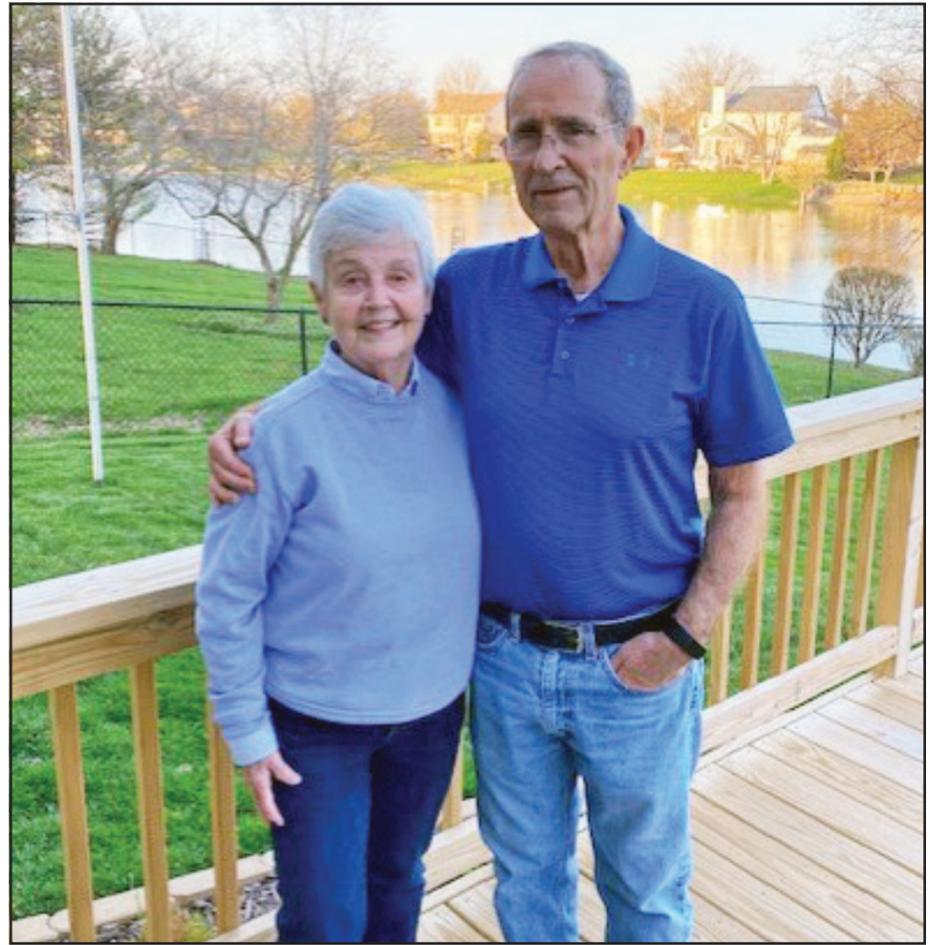
On those evenings when a cardinal appears and eight squares light up on their Zoom rosary meeting, there's the feeling that everyone in their family is together again.

"Mom and Dad have always given us gentle guidance in our faith journey," Ross says. "We grew up with the simple wisdom that 'God will always be there for you.'"

"The faith that has been passed down to us by our parents is what allows us to recognize the gifts and graces given to us, while also knowing where to turn in troubling times."

## A saying that has shaped a life

Benedictine Sister Patricia Dede has never forgotten one of her mother's favorite sayings, "Whenever I go by the church, I stop and make a visit. So that when I'm carried in, the Lord won't say, 'Who is it?'"



Joan and Larry Johnson have shared a Zoom link with their children to pray a daily rosary during the COVID-19 pandemic. (Submitted photo)

That saying has struck a chord with Sister Patricia again during the pandemic.

"I've had extra time to make more visits to our chapel, but I've really missed



Sr. Patricia Dede, O.S.B.

my two volunteer ministries," says Sister Patricia, who is 87 and a member of the community of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. "I volunteered at the food pantry at St. Vincent de Paul and as an extraordinary minister of holy Communion at St. Francis Hospital. My age prevents me from continuing these ministries during the pandemic."

In her prayers in the chapel one day, Sister Patricia told God how sorry she felt that she could no longer help in those ministries.

"Then the realization came to me that God could take care of these ministries without me. I knew that all the people who I thought needed me had a greater intercessor, namely God. So now, instead of being physically present at my former ministries, I use the time I would have given to them to be in chapel praying for them and for those who have assumed these ministries."

"And since I do spend more time in chapel, I truly believe that when I am carried in, God will say, 'Oh, I know you! Come enjoy your heavenly home.' †

# Sharing the Gospel means embracing the cross, pope says at chrism Mass

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Living and preaching the Gospel always involves embracing "the cross," whether it be in the form of misunderstanding, hostility or outright persecution, Pope Francis told priests gathered for the chrism Mass for the Diocese of Rome.

In the life of Jesus and in the lives of his disciples today, "the hour of joyful proclamation, the hour of persecution and the hour of the cross go together," the

pope said at the Mass on April 1 at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica.

Pope Francis did not celebrate a chrism Mass last year because Italy, and much of the world, was in the midst of the first huge wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

But even with vaccines being distributed and death rates dropping, Italy was under a modified lockdown, so only about 75 priests representing their confreres in the Diocese of Rome were able to attend the Mass with their bishop, the pope.

A total of about 200 people, including three dozen cardinals, were present for the liturgy.

The chrism Mass has two unique characteristics: the blessing of the oils used for the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, ordination and the anointing of the sick; and priests renewing the promises they made at ordination.

Deacons brought the oils in large silver urns to the pope, who prayed that God would bless them and the people who will be anointed with them.

Then the priests present vowed that they were "resolved to be more united with the Lord Jesus and more closely conformed to him," and that, out of love for Christ, they renewed the promises they "willingly and joyfully pledged" on the day of their ordination.

The liturgy also includes the bishop asking the faithful present to pray for their priests and for him. Pope Francis slightly altered the text of the second prayer, asking the congregation, "Pray for me—I need it—so that I may be faithful to the apostolic service entrusted to me, and so that in your midst I may be made, day by day, more the image of Christ, the priest—simply that—good shepherd, teacher and servant of all."

In his homily, Pope Francis acknowledged how many obstacles a priest can encounter as he teaches, preaches and celebrates the sacraments.

The story from Luke's Gospel of Jesus reading the Scriptures in the synagogue at Nazareth, arousing both admiration and anger, the pope said, shows how "Jesus' words have the power to bring to light whatever each of

us holds in the depths of our heart, often mixed like the wheat and the tares.

"The preaching of the Gospel is always linked to the embrace of some particular cross," Pope Francis said. "The gentle light of God's word shines brightly in well-disposed hearts but awakens confusion and rejection in those that are not."

That conflict is seen repeatedly in the Gospels, the pope said, noting how, for example, "the tender love of the merciful father irresistibly draws the prodigal son home, but also leads to anger and resentment on the part of the elder son," or how "the generosity of the owner of the vineyard is a reason for gratitude among the workers called at the last hour, but it also provokes a bitter reaction by one of those called first, who is offended by the generosity of his employer."

The cross, including misunderstanding, rejection and persecution, is present in the Gospel from the very beginning of Jesus' life, the pope said. "The cross is not an afterthought, something that happened by chance in the Lord's life."

And, he told the priests, "it is true that the cross is present in our preaching of the Gospel, but it is the cross of our salvation."

"We are not scandalized" by the presence of the cross—"the large crosses of humanity and the small crosses in the lives of each of us"—he said, because "Jesus himself was not scandalized by seeing that his joyful preaching of salvation to the poor was not received wholeheartedly, but amid the shouts and threats of those who refused to hear his word."

"We are not scandalized because Jesus was not scandalized by having to heal the sick and to set prisoners free amid the moralistic, legalistic and clerical squabbles that arose every time he did some good," the pope continued.

"The Lord always gives us what we ask for, but he does so in his divine way," Pope Francis said. "That way involves the cross. Not for masochism. But for love, love to the very end." †



Pope Francis breathes over chrism oil as he celebrates Holy Thursday chrism Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on April 1. (CNS photo/Vatican Media)

# CHRISM

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parish life coordinators and a small representation of deacons, religious and lay faithful.

This year, the congregation was still limited in size due to the ongoing pandemic. But it was larger than the chrism Mass celebrated nine months previously. And lay Catholics from across the archdiocese could take part in it.

“Even with masks on, you look and sound wonderful,” Archbishop Thompson said in his opening remarks. “It’s great to be with you. It’s a wonderful day to have the chrism Mass.”

The chrism Mass features the blessing of oils used in several sacraments and in the dedication of churches and altars. Priests also renew their ordination promises during the liturgy.

Jeanie Leising, a member of St. Mary Parish in Rushville, has attended several chrism Masses in the past with her husband Mark and was glad to be able to attend this year.

“It’s a real blessing and relief to be able to come back, to have it in Holy Week and to really just do what our Church does,” Jeanie said. “It deepens my faith.”

Franciscan Sister Martha Ann Rich, who ministers at St. Francis Hospital in Indianapolis, was grateful to attend the Mass. The hospital where she serves continues to care for those suffering from COVID-19, as it has done since the start of the pandemic.

“As I’m here, I’m thinking of all the individuals who are not able to come, who are suffering in their own way,” Sister Martha Ann said. “Hopefully, I’m representing them.”

More than 90 priests serving across central and southern Indiana also took part in the chrism Mass.

“The [priestly] fraternity is good,” said Father Christopher Wadelton, pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus. “It’s good to be able to be together again.”

He also noted that he is becoming busier responding to a growing number



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson processes on March 30, Tuesday of Holy Week, into SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis at the start of the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass. (Photos by Sean Gallagher)

of people who are seeking ministry from St. Bartholomew. That growing desire has come as knowledge of how to protect people from the coronavirus has increased and more people have been vaccinated.

“We are coming back every week a little more and a little more,” Father Wadelton said. “It has not slowed down as far as people wanting ministry. Life is good.”

Randy Schneider was one of several archdiocesan seminarians to attend the chrism Mass.

The member of All Saints Parish in Dearborn County hopes one day to join Father Wadelton in priestly ministry. He is a freshman at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary and at Marian University, both in Indianapolis.

“The way that we’ve pulled through this past year is encouraging to me,” Schneider said. “We’re still working on getting everyone to go back to Mass and be able to receive the sacraments. It’s really important to me.”

In his homily, Archbishop Thompson reflected on the sacraments that are tied so closely to the oils he was about to bless.

“The blessing of the sacred oils represents the power of divine



Archbishop Charles C. Thompson ritually breathes into chrism oil on March 30, Tuesday of Holy Week, at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass.

grace to heal, transform and send forth those who receive sacramental anointing,” he said.

The Church’s sacramental worship contributes to the healing of a society suffering and divided in so many ways, Archbishop Thompson noted.

“At the heart of this celebration is the very nature of the Church’s missionary impulse, as Pope Francis reminds us, calling forth each baptized member in authentic witness of holiness and mission,” he said.

In responding to this call, Archbishop Thompson said, Catholics should think more about others and their needs and less about themselves and their agendas.

“In doing so, as Pope Francis exhorts us in his October 2020 encyclical letter, *‘Fratelli Tutti,’* we bear witness to the fruits of fraternity and social friendship,” Archbishop Thompson said. “How important this witness is in such a fractured, divided world. Amid the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, social unrest and political polarization, this witness is as essential as ever for the soul of Church and state.”

Archbishop Thompson went on to say that keeping Jesus Christ at the center of that witness is essential to making it effective.



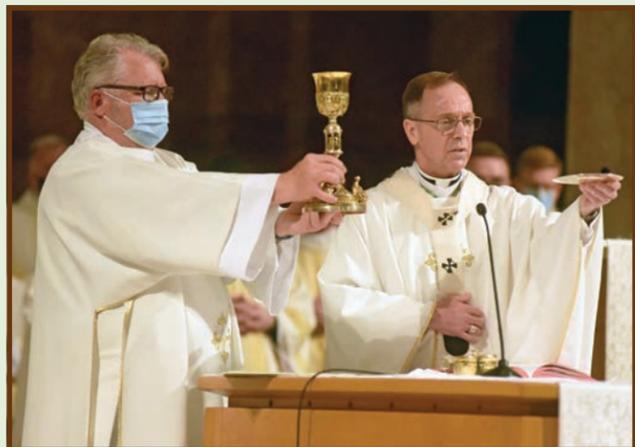
Mark and Jeanie Leising, members of St. Mary Parish in Rushville, pray during the March 30 chrism Mass.

He is “the beginning and the end of all that we are about as disciples ... and ministers of the Gospel. That is why we must always strive to be Christ-centered rather than self-centered.

“United in communion with God and one another as one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, the Body of Christ, we are equipped to go forth and transform the world rather than be transformed by the world,” Archbishop Thompson said. “This is the mission entrusted to us by Jesus Christ in bringing about the Kingdom of God.

“All for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.”

(For more photos from the chrism Mass, visit [www.CriterionOnline.com](http://www.CriterionOnline.com).) †



Deacon John McShea, left, and Archbishop Charles C. Thompson elevate the Eucharist during the chrism Mass on March 30. Deacon McShea serves at St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.



Dabrice Bartet, a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis, proclaims the second reading during the annual archdiocesan chrism Mass on March 30.

# Faith *Alive!*

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## Charity for all at the heart of encyclical on interreligious dialogue

By Amy Uelmen

As the first encyclical to promote interreligious dialogue, *“Ecclesiam Suam”* (“His own Church”), published in August 1964, marks an important milestone in Church history.

Written in the midst of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), St. Paul VI took pains not to anticipate the ongoing work of the council or to “steal its thunder,” (#66) but aimed instead to prepare and support the work for the documents on dialogue that were to emerge.

Notwithstanding that modest stance, *“Ecclesiam Suam”* still speaks deeply to the challenges of dialogue today. With the passing of time, the work seems to have become a very tall order.

Increasing polarization impedes dialogue in many areas of culture, including between and within religious communities. Some worry that attitudes of dialogue create confusion rather than clarity and can even weaken the capacity to address injustice.

For all of these reasons, it is interesting to note when Pope Paul officially opened the door to this work: in 1964, at the height of the Cold War. He was not naive. Dialogue is not, he explains, “an immoderate desire to make peace and sink differences at all costs” (#88).

Taking stock of historical conditions, the pope acknowledged “a world that offers to the Church not one but a hundred forms of possible contacts, some of which are open and easy, others difficult and problematic, and many, unfortunately, wholly unfavorable to friendly dialogue” (#13). Dialogue has always been a complex endeavor, requiring a variety of approaches for varying circumstances and conversation partners.

Given these challenges, equally striking are the powerful resources for spiritual renewal that Pope Paul highlighted just prior to his discussion of dialogue. A renewed discovery of the Church as the mystical body of Christ promised a vision not only of how Christ himself lives in the Church, but also of “Christ who manifests himself in manifold guise in the various members of his society” (#35).

“Zeal for the spirit of poverty” not only increases awareness of “the many failures and mistakes we have made in the past,” but also underlines the “principle on which we must now base our way of



Pope Francis greets people during his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Oct. 23, 2019. The pope greeted people taking part in an interreligious conference promoted by the Sikhi Sewa Society. St. Paul VI's 1964 encyclical letter *“Ecclesiam Suam”* sets forth charity for all as a founding principle for interreligious dialogue. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

life” (#54).

Finally, the “cultivation of charity” is “the key to everything. It sets all to rights. There is nothing that charity cannot achieve and renew” (#56).

Taken together, it would be hard to imagine a better preparation, or set of convictions, for the work of dialogue also today. The protagonist in any encounter with the world is Christ himself, alive and active in the Church, as pastors and

people move with “the spirit of poverty [that] should regulate everything they do and say” (#54).

What then are the marks of dialogue in this spirit? It might be helpful to consider them as qualities of charity. Just as God takes the initiative in loving humanity, Pope Paul suggests that we too should be ready to take the first step toward others, reaching out to everyone, without distinction.

Motivated by love, respectful dialogue is never self-seeking or coercive. Instead, it adapts itself to the circumstances and needs of those it engages.

The pope's description of an approach modeled on the “meekness” of Christ beautifully depicts all of these qualities. “It would indeed be a disgrace if our dialogue were marked by arrogance, the use of bared words or offensive bitterness. What gives it its authority is the fact that it affirms the truth, shares with others the gifts of charity, is itself an example of virtue, avoids peremptory language, makes no demands. It is peaceful, has no use for extreme methods, is patient under contradiction, and inclines toward generosity” (#81).

Finally, the pope also highlights the importance of taking “great care” to listen—not only to what people say, “but more especially what they have it in their hearts to say” (#87).

To whom is the Church's dialogue addressed? Starting with the widest “concentric circle,” a spirit of dialogue excludes no one: “All things human are

our concern” (#97).

In the dialogue with those who worship God, we can find a vast terrain of shared “spiritual and moral values,” and work together on shared projects (#108).

With Christians of various traditions, all that we have in common provides “a good and fruitful basis for our dialogue” (#109).

Finally, the pope's hope for the dialogue with Catholics is “to show itself ready to listen to the variety of views that are expressed in the world today. We want it to be the sort of dialogue that will make Catholics virtuous, wise, unfettered, fair-minded and strong” (#113).

Of course, each of these immense terrains for dialogue has grown and developed through the years, walking in the light of the further reflections of Vatican II and journeying with our changing world. But the hope and the conviction remain the same: that the work of dialogue continues to “increase the holiness and vitality of the mystical body of Christ on Earth” (#116).

As we reflect on how to strengthen these commitments in light of current challenges, *“Ecclesiam Suam”* remains a treasure-trove of insight and guidance.

(Amy Uelmen is a lecturer in religion and professional life at Georgetown Law School. She earned a bachelor's degree, a law degree and juridical science research doctorate at Georgetown University and a master's degree in theology at Fordham University.) †



Cardinal Patrick D'Rozario of Dhaka embraces a Muslim Rohingya refugee from Myanmar during an interreligious and ecumenical meeting for peace led by Pope Francis in the garden of the archbishop's residence in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on Dec. 1, 2017. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

## Joyful Witness/Kimberly Pohovey

## Take the time to marvel at new growth around, within you

It's a rare 70-degree, sunny day in March. My husband and I take advantage of the unexpectedly gorgeous day to accomplish some yard work.



I am busy clearing the flower beds surrounding our back patio when from the corner of my eye I see a bird land on the pergola above my head. Looking up, I see where the bird is

beginning to create a nest in the tangles of grape vines above the wooden structure.

I take a moment to study the vines. When we moved into this house 10 years ago, we were grateful that the beautiful pergola was already in place. Soon after, we planted grape plants at the base of each of the four pillars. As the vines began to grow, we tied, pruned and trained the vines to go up and over the top of the pergola to eventually form a canopy and provide shade to the patio below.

These vines, in late March, look barren. They are simply a tangle of dark brown twigs. No leaves are budding yet. From experience, I know that in a matter

of weeks new life will spring from what looks like dead plants. Buds will form, leaves will burst forward and eventually in the late summer, grape clusters will dangle across the pergola ceiling.

I start to think about how amazed I am of the new growth that comes from a seemingly dead state. Year after year, we witness the world go dormant during the cold winter only to see new life erupt in the spring. Throughout the winter, we often sprinkle ashes from our fireplace at the bottom of the grape vines which serve as a type of fertilizer that enables prolific growth and helps bear more fruit. I take this as a sign of how we humans also need to experience death to spring forth new life.

"Death" in this case can come in many forms—sickness, suffering, loneliness. We often go dormant when experiencing these struggles. However, once we conquer these hardships, God calls us forth to new life, to new growth. Much like the endless cycle of Earth's seasons, we too face seasons of death and renewal throughout our lives.

This cycle bears fruit—literally in this case. I think about the bird I saw carrying bits of twigs to the top of the pergola.

She will create a nest in which to birth her babies within the protective confines of the grape vines. Last year, we counted three such nests up there.

During the summer months, these vines will provide not only shade but natural beauty where underneath we can relax, experience calm, and awe at God's creation. Late in the summer, we will harvest our grapes to make jars and jars of jelly which we give away to family and neighbors. This year, we hope to produce wine as well. All this happens because we planted a foundation of grape vines, we tended them, we fed them, and in the end, we waited through the seasonal barrenness to appreciate the new growth.

This Easter season, take the time to marvel at new growth around and within you. Appreciate the reappearance of singing birds, enjoy the colorful blossoms of flowers, and be thankful for the struggles that enable you to grow in new life with Christ.

(Kimberly Pohovey is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis. She is the director of major and planned gifts for the archdiocese.) †

## Twenty Something/

Christina Capecci

## The hand-me-down: a love letter that endures

There are echoes of Romeo and Juliet, but the ending is happier.

This story of forbidden love took



place long ago on a Mediterranean island—1870s Sicily, to be exact.

Elizabeth Lagudice was a beautiful noblewoman with dark curls and big eyes. Dona Elizabeth, as she was called, made a fabled

mistake: She fell in love with a tailor.

She was enchanted by Matteo Parisi, the hard-working young man who made dresses and evening coats for nobility. But because he lacked her social status, her parents did not approve of the match. And in a move that smacks of a Disney villain, they sequestered Elizabeth at home, hoping it would dissolve the attachment.

It did not.

Servants were sympathetic to the young couple, and they smuggled Matteo's finest threads to Elizabeth to use as the cutwork for her hope chest. Among the hidden fabric was an exquisite white bedsheet.

It was a love letter made of linen. Elizabeth held it close to her heart, and it kept the flame of love alive while they were apart.

The needlework expected of young Italian women of that era was tedious. Elizabeth labored over the bedsheet from Matteo for two years, it is estimated, cutting tiny holes and then delicately threading them together, all while dreaming of a future with the handsome tailor.

Eventually the two were reunited and married. They moved to Canada for a new beginning. Far from home and the aid of her servants, Elizabeth faced a steep learning curve. According to one story, she didn't even know how to do her own hair. But the love she and Matteo shared only deepened with time, blessing them with seven children.

They built a wonderful life together. They were self-sufficient, practical—they slept on the linen bedsheet Elizabeth had embroidered—and happy.

In 1908, tragedy struck back home: Europe's most powerful earthquake shook Sicily, followed by a vicious tsunami, flattening the island and killing some 200,000 Italians. No one from Elizabeth's family survived.

The family estate had vanished, cementing her new life without noble status. She never looked back.

Time passed, and Elizabeth grew to be a content old woman. One day in 1965, her daughter Josephine, herself an old woman, uncovered the bedsheet in a trunk. It was spotted and yellowed, but after being laundered and bleached, it came out beautifully—the Italian love letter, fully intact.

Then came a brilliant idea: to turn it into a christening gown. Elizabeth's great-great-grandson Michael was the first to wear it, baptized at 1 week old. His siblings wore it later and then the next generation, stitching the family together in a sacramental way. It enabled them to preserve their heirloom and their heritage.

The gown reminds the family that love trumps all. It's a sign of hope, that a young woman could embroider for years and years, overcome opposition and finally marry the man of her dreams.

"It speaks to the determination of people who have not always had a lot," said Michael's mother, Beth, who was named after the Sicilian noblewoman and is now a 77-year-old retired postmaster.

The gown is also a symbol of trust in divine providence. Like Elizabeth's

See CAPECCHI, page 16

## Our Works of Charity/David Bethuram

## 'Love' is at the heart of the mission of Catholic Charities

If you asked me why I love my job, I could go on and on about how I have rewarding work. I'm fortunate to make a living now doing something I find challenging and inspiring.

My faith is strengthened by the process of working with gifted and caring staff and volunteers who truly care for people most in need in their communities and have faith in others. This is why I love Catholic Charities.

I love that we help children find a forever home. Children who have been abused physically or emotionally. Children who have the God-given potential to be saints, but who have been treated like leftovers are treasured here. We embrace them and come alongside them in seeking a brighter future.

I love that we have an open door for the homeless and people in crisis to seek help, even if they have no money, even in the middle of the night.

I love that we welcome the stranger, the refugee and the immigrant who is infinitely precious to God but is hated and slandered in our midst. We help this person get food, get educated, speak English, get a job and reunite their family.

I love that we counsel the doubtful, that we have talented and loving therapists in our archdiocesan Catholic Charities network to help people to see the truth that they are beautiful and they are capable, with God's help, of enduring the trials of life and recovering the joy that God created them for.

I love that we embrace the mother and child, particularly when that child is in its weakest form, in the womb, subject to having its life snuffed out by a frightened world that questions whether life is worth living. I love that we provide help and give hope to this mother to strengthen her in her labor to see

that this exquisite and unique creation of a child is given a chance to breathe and thrive.

I love that we offer services to an "at risk" child or teen who has had to grow up too early. They have experienced or witnessed substance abuse, physical and sexual abuse, illiteracy, anger control issues, sexual activity, teen pregnancy, suicidal thoughts, self-mutilation and low self-esteem.

I love that we feed the hungry. The working poor, the homeless, those of every culture and religious belief are welcomed to the table of plenty, the table of hope and hospitality, where joy-filled volunteers serve them and dine with them.

I love that we care for the sick, for the person whose life has progressed to a place of great weakness, where they depend on others for almost every need. I love that they can depend on Catholic Charities to be their friend, their companion in the daily tasks and joys of life, which is precious even when it is reaching its natural end.

I love that we care for frail and vulnerable older adults and adults with disabilities who need to have a safe place to be with others and are not alone while their caregivers can go to work or attend school.

And I love that we have volunteers of all ages joining us in service to our most in-need and vulnerable neighbors. Their caring hearts bring respect and dignity to all whom we are privileged to help, that the message we send is: There is still much to be done! We need your help! Come and join us!

Thank you for making Catholic Charities beautiful. Let's go forward. We have more to do.

(David Bethuram is executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Catholic Charities. E-mail him at [dbethuram@archindy.org](mailto:dbethuram@archindy.org).) †

## The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

## Imbibe in the awe of God's creation and experience the holy

Spring's awesomeness has arrived. In Washington, D.C., forsythia, daffodils and tulips adorn front yards, with azaleas and dogwoods to follow.



The stunning colors are splendid, and equally marvelous is experiencing Mother Nature give birth and dormant soil produce life.

Synonyms for "awesome" are "amazing,"

"astounding," "breathtaking" and "remarkable." Within each of these concepts is the spirit of standing in the presence of wonderment. What is the cause of this awesomeness ultimately?

It is God, who is goodness, beauty and truth.

In Joyce Kilmer's poem "Trees," he celebrates God's amazing creation of the tree:

"A tree that looks at God all day,/ And lifts her leafy arms to pray;/ A tree that may in summer wear/ A nest of robins in her hair;/ Upon whose bosom snow has lain;/ Who intimately lives with rain./ Poems are made by fools like me,/ But only God can make a tree."

Inspiring thoughts like this reveal life's better side. Why is it then that many of today's people do not enjoy real awe, a feeling that radiates with the heavenly?

One reason is we live in a technical, secular culture in which a sense of being God's creature living in God's awesome creation is missing. A sense that we are a holy creation of God and are surrounded by God's astonishing creation is absent.

It is true that people experience awesomeness, but often it is superficial ersatz emotion—excitement, that, though momentarily strong, is neither fruitful nor lasting. Take for example, movies filled with awesome feats and tender love that quickly fade once the sensations die. How

then is lasting, godly awe cultivated?

In German, "wahrnehmen" means to receive the truth—to receive into oneself, to submit to the influence of things, to place oneself within their grasp, to see and perceive.

In the Cantic of Daniel, we are invited to practice "wahrnehmen": "Everything growing on Earth, bless the Lord. ... Seas and rivers, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever" (Dn 3:76, 78).

The awesome list of God's creations invites us to enter into God's awesomeness, to grasp it and submit to how blessed we are to participate in it, to experience awesome holiness.

Equally important, when we enter into God's astounding creation, we are elevated to an exhilarating level of wonderment.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †

Divine Mercy Sunday/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

# The Sunday Readings

Sunday, April 11, 2021

- Acts of the Apostles 4:32-35
- 1 John 5:1-6
- John 20:19-31

As almost always in the Easter season, the Acts of the Apostles furnishes the Liturgy of the Word with its first reading for Mass this weekend.



Scholars believe that Acts is the work of the Evangelist who wrote St. Luke's Gospel. Acts, therefore, may properly be seen as a continuation of the story presented in

Luke's Gospel, which closes with the ascension of Jesus. Acts then begins at this point.

As it progresses, Acts traces for some years the development of the infant Church, describing the plight of its first members. In so doing, it provides

a fascinating insight into the formation of the Church's structure, as well as a powerful lesson in the basic beliefs that so compelled absolute loyalty and devotion from the early Christians, whom Acts praises as great examples of unqualified faith, especially in the face of human ignorance and treachery.

In this weekend's reading, Acts presents the first members of the Church as being "of one heart and one mind" (Acts 4:32). Love for and adherence to the Lord were central to their lives.

The Apostles bore witness to the resurrection of Jesus. The Lord's special followers and students, whom Jesus commissioned to continue the work of salvation, had literally seen the risen Lord. The first Christians revered the Apostles.

Love for others, in the model of Jesus,

## Daily Readings

**Monday, April 12**

Acts 4:23-31  
Psalm 2:1-9  
John 3:1-8

**Tuesday, April 13**

St. Martin I, pope and martyr  
Acts 4:32-37  
Psalm 93:1-2, 5  
John 3:7b-15

**Wednesday, April 14**

Acts 5:17-26  
Psalm 34:2-9  
John 3:16-21

**Thursday, April 15**

Acts 5:27-33  
Psalm 34:2, 9, 17-20  
John 3:31-36

**Friday, April 16**

Acts 5:34-42  
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14  
John 6:1-15

**Saturday, April 17**

Acts 6:1-7  
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19  
John 6:16-21

**Sunday, April 18**

Third Sunday of Easter  
Acts 3:13-15, 17-19  
Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-9  
1 John 2:1-5a  
Luke 24:35-48

## My Journey to God

# Jesus I Trust in You

By Rosemary Richardson

Lord, why me? we may sometimes say  
as we thoughtfully pray  
We seem to have no buffer  
as we daily may suffer  
seeing so much strife  
in our daily perils of life  
Hurting more each time we fall  
not wanting to get up after them at all  
So rise up after each mistake  
remembering what is at stake  
Our aim is to get to heaven  
to be with our brethren  
So ask daily for His helping hand  
as we wait to join heaven's angelic band  
Saying each and every day Jesus I Trust in You  
because we know it is so wonderfully true.



(Rosemary Richardson is a member of St. Joseph Parish in Corydon. Image: This image depicts the original Divine Mercy painting approved by St. Faustina Kowalska: Christ stepping out of the darkness with his hand below his shoulder and his eyes cast downward. More information about the Divine Mercy image, prayers, message and devotion can be found at [thedivinemercy.org](http://thedivinemercy.org).)

(Image courtesy of [thedivinemercy.org](http://thedivinemercy.org).)

was more than a platitude or vague ideal. The early Christians assisted the poor. They sold their property and donated the proceeds to this effort.

St. John's First Epistle supplies the second reading, defining what being a Christian means.

All believers must give themselves fully in love to God through trust and faith in Jesus. Because of this commitment and because of the Lord's redeeming acts, each Christian is a child of God. This term means much more than merely earthly creation. It means eternal life.

Baptism in water symbolizes and makes real this absolute commitment.

The Gospel reading for this weekend is from St. John's Gospel. It is a resurrection narrative, telling a story with which most Christians are quite familiar. Recall the dismay among the followers of Jesus when they found the empty tomb. Where had the body of the Lord been taken?

This reading answers the question. The body of the Lord has been taken nowhere. Jesus lives! He is risen! The encounter with the doubting, demanding Thomas affirms this fact.

Resurrection from the dead is stunning in itself, but Jesus further acts as God by conferring the very power of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. He grants them

the authority of forgiving sins, a divine privilege as sins affront God. He sends them to the four corners of the world to bring redemption to all humanity.

Passing through locked doors as if they were thin air, Jesus greeted the Apostles with "Peace be with you" (Jn 20:19). Jesus makes clear that peace only is in God. The living Lord is the sole source of peace.

### Reflection

This weekend, the Church calls its people to rejoice in God's mercy. It defines mercy. God has redeemed us. Further, it recalls the great compassion and charity of the first Christians. They imitated Jesus, the Son of God. God is love.

When we observe Divine Mercy Sunday, we remember that, in and through Jesus, the risen Son of God, divine mercy is with us. The memory, however, is dynamic. It summons us to follow the Lord's example in our attitude toward others, our active compassion for one and all.

Finally, we are not alone. The Lord left us the Apostles. With their successors in the bishops of the Church as our guides and the bearers of divine mercy, literally, we find forgiveness and the light to see the way to follow Jesus. †

## Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

### The obligation to worship on Sundays can be lifted for serious reasons

**Q** Is it still considered a mortal sin to miss Mass on Sundays or holy days without a good reason? Where

in the Bible does it say that? I think it should be a matter of personal choice. I love to go to Mass, and I have never missed except when I had to. But I don't think it should be that strict. (Iowa)



**A** It is still considered a mortal sin to miss Mass on a day of obligation without a good reason. The Church has always believed that this obligation stems from the Ten Commandments given to Moses, one of which was to "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

The requirement dates to the early days of Christianity and was written into the legal code of the Church from the first centuries.

The Old Testament Sabbath was on Saturday, marking God's "day of rest" following the creation of the world. Christians, instead, have always kept holy Sunday, since it marked the day of Christ's resurrection, which completed the Lord's work of salvation.

The Church has always understood that being a Christian is not just a private matter; while we engage in private worship and prayer throughout the week, our primary

form of worship is public and communal, which is why Sunday Mass is so central.

The teaching of the Church on this could not be more clear. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says:

"The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason, the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason [for example, illness, the care of infants] or dispensed by their own pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin" (#2181).

I should note here that gravity of matter is just one of three necessary conditions for a mortal sin—the others being complete consent of the will and full knowledge of the sinful character of the act or omission.

And certain circumstances can excuse one from attendance—such as unavoidable work obligations or inclement weather sufficient to put one's safety at risk.

Currently, of course—during the COVID-19 pandemic—the obligation to attend Sunday Mass has been lifted in many parts of the world, including in most of the United States.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at [askfatherdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:askfatherdoyle@gmail.com) and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.) †

# Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

**ALEXANDER, Marsha M.**, 59, St. Mary, Rushville, March 26. Wife of Gary Alexander. Mother of Carrie and Rachel Alexander. Daughter of Anthony and Joan Meo. Sister of Stacie Kirkham, Diana Tobin, Angie Workman, Sonya Zoller, Roxie, Guy, Joe, Mike and Vincent Meo. Grandmother of one.

**ANSPACH, Joan M.**, 94, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, March 15. Mother of Lori Schroeder and Kenneth Anspach. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of seven.

**BANE, Fabiola**, 81, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Richmond, Feb. 9. Mother of Sandy Bane-Hawley, Kimm Huntington, Debbie, Lori and Tony Bane. Sister of Hope Baca, Toni Chavez, Teresa Gomez, Virginia Lucero, Danny and Eddy Armijo. Grandmother of 12. Great-grandmother of 26.

**BESSO, Eileen C.**, 100, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, March 23. Mother of Elana, Ernette, David, Donald and Duane. Sister of Annetta Logston and Ray Meunier. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of 13. Great-great-grandmother of two.

**BLANFORD, Jeanine R.**, 77, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, March 17. Wife of James Blanford. Mother of Theresa Hill, Maureen Paul, Donna Widmer, Paul and Patrick Blanford. Sister of Mary Ann Haacker, Patricia Locchetta, Glenda Moore, Kevin and Mike Stone. Grandmother of 14.

**BOND, Damon T.**, 75, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, March 16. Husband of Earla Bond. Father of Joseph Bond. Grandfather of three.



Family and friends attend the funeral Mass for Boulder, Colo., police officer Eric Talley at the Cathedral Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Denver on March 29. He was killed on March 22 while responding to a shooting at a grocery store in Boulder in which 10 people died. (CNS photo/Daniel Petty, courtesy Archdiocese of Denver)

**DICKMAN, Eileen**, 86, Holy Family, Oldenburg, March 25. Mother of Linda Case, Mary Jo Hassett, Bruce, Jr., Jerry, Joe and Kurt Dickman. Sister of Pat Haessig, Rose Kinker, Ruth and Henry Youngman. Grandmother of 15. Great-grandmother of 30.

**DIRR, Jeffrey**, 57, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, March 13. Husband of Molly Dirr. Father of Ashley and Morgan Dirr. Brother of Dennis, Gary and Wayne Dirr.

**ECKERT, Mary Frances**, 78, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, March 23. Wife of John Eckert. Mother of Albert, Michael, Paul and Phillip Eckert. Sister of Ann Bennett, Martha Lone, Estelle Mitchell, Charlie, Joe, John and Steve McIntyre. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of two.

**HALLY, Elizabeth**, 90, St. Mary, Greensburg, March 21. Mother of Pamela Jackson, Samuel and Timothy Hally. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of eight.

**HANNEMAN, Carolyn A.**, 86, St. Joseph, Shelbyville, March 22. Wife of William Hanneman. Mother of Michael and Randal Hanneman. Sister of Carol and Richard Baxter. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of one.

**MAPPES, Carol M.**, 83, St. Jude, Indianapolis, March 26. Mother of David, Eric, John and Scott Mappes. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of one.

**MCDANIEL, Jennifer M.**, 63, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Indianapolis, Feb. 15. Mother of Shannon Copper, Melissa, James, Jeremy and Steve McDaniel. Sister of Mary Ann Harding, Debbie Spears, Bill and Steve Morgan. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of one.

**O'CONNOR, Joan M.**, 62, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, March 3. Sister of James, John and William O'Connor. Aunt of several.

**O'NEILL, Michael D.**, 63, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Feb. 11. Brother of Kim Roberts, Mark and Randy O'Neill.

**SCHINDLER, Carl A.**, 80, Holy Family, New Albany, March 24. Husband of Goldie Lou Schindler. Father of Tori Shumate. Brother of Alberta Peay, Joyce, Bobby, Donnie, Kenny, Joe and Mike Schindler. Grandfather of two.

**SMITH, Daniel W.**, 83, St. Bernard, Frenchtown, March 25. Father of Melissa

Hall, Lela Monroe, Madonna Taylor, Danielle and Shane Smith. Brother of Martha Smith. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of five.

**SMITH, James A.**, 73, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, March 23. Father of Nicole Smith. Brother of Nanette Anderson and René Torrence. Grandfather of two. Great-grandfather of four.

**TROSSMAN, Lucille A.**, 94, All Saints, Dearborn County, March 24. Sister of JoAnn Buschur, Rita Duggins, Rose Martini, Violet and Floyd Trossman. Aunt of several.

**VELIKAN, Frank**, 84, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, March 17. Father of Diane, Paula, Sarah, Victoria, Chris, Frank, Greg, Jeff and Phil. Brother of Jim Velikan. Grandfather of 16.

**WEISENBACH, Andrew V.**, 85, St. Anthony of Padua, Morris, March 26. Husband of Eleen Weisenbach. Father of Vickie Heil, Neetz Lach, Cindy Meyer, Dan and Jason Weisenbach. Brother of Ruth Billman, Edwina Ertel and Ray Weisenbach. Grandfather of 10. Great-grandfather of five.

**YOST, Alfred**, 91, St. John Paul II, Sellersburg, March 21. Father of David, Kevin, Paul, Stephen and Thomas Yost. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of five. †

## Franciscan Sister Marta Aiken served in education and as a hospital chaplain

Franciscan Sister Marta Aiken died on March 29 at the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Oldenburg. She was 95.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on April 6 at the Motherhouse Chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

Sister Marta was born on May 6, 1925, in Cincinnati. She and her family later moved to Richmond where they were members of the former St. Andrew Parish. During World War II, she studied at Marian University in Indianapolis, earning a bachelor's degree in history. She also worked during that time in retail stores and in a munitions factory.

Sister Marta joined the Sisters of St. Francis on Sept. 7, 1947, and professed final vows on Aug. 12, 1953. She earned a master's degree

in education with a concentration in Spanish at Xavier University in Cincinnati. She completed further studies at the University of Madrid in Spain, Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vt., and at St. Louis University in St. Louis.

During 73 years as a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Sister Marta ministered in Catholic education for 31 years, as a hospital chaplain for 14 years and as a health care chaplain at the motherhouse for 20 years. She served in Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri and Ohio.

In the archdiocese, Sister Marta ministered in Indianapolis at the former St. Mary Academy from 1963-67 and at Marian University from 1967-79.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-0100. †

## Priest, six others killed by armed gunmen after Mass at Nigerian parish on March 30

LAGOS, Nigeria (CNS)—Father Ferdinand Fanen Ngugban and six others died of gunshot wounds after armed gunmen invaded the grounds of St. Paul Parish in Ayetwar on March 30, said the Diocese of Katsina-Ala.

"After celebrating Mass and while he prepared to leave for the chrism Mass at St. Gerald Majella Catholic Cathedral, Katsina-Ala, to renew his priestly vows alongside his brother priests, there was pandemonium among the internally displaced persons who took refuge in the parish premises," said a statement from the diocese. "Father Ferdinand went out to find out the cause of the

confusion. He was shot in the head as he tried to take cover after sighting some armed gunmen," the diocese said.

Father Ngugban, who served as assistant pastor at St. Paul Parish, was ordained a priest in 2015.

The attack took place in Benue state. The gunmen reportedly raided the village and set houses on fire before attacking the parish.

Although police did not immediately say who was responsible, Gov. Samuel Ortom promised to pursue justice. Nine days earlier, Ortom's convoy was attacked while traveling through the state. †

### Online Lay Ministry Formation

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has partnered with the University of Notre Dame and Catholic Distance University (CDU) to offer not-for-credit online theology classes:

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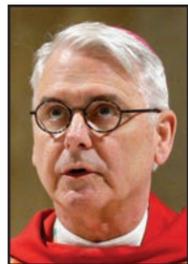
If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator. There are two ways to make a report:

- 1 Ethics Point**  
Confidential, Online Reporting  
[www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com](http://www.archdioceseofindianapolis.ethicspoint.com) or 888-393-6810
- 2** Carla Hill, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Victim Assistance Coordinator  
P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1410  
**317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548**  
[carlahill@archindy.org](mailto:carlahill@archindy.org)

# Catholic leaders welcome eviction moratorium extension to June 30

CLEVELAND (CNS)—The eviction moratorium put in place by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has been extended three months, until June 30.

The order from Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC director, said the extension was



Archbishop Paul S. Coakley

necessary to prevent potentially millions of renter households from being forced from their homes in the coming weeks.

The action was welcomed by humanitarian and faith-based housing advocates who sought the extension as the coronavirus pandemic

continues, and the number of reported cases continues to rise in much of the country.

Leaders from three national Catholic organizations were among those urging the CDC to act on behalf of renters and homeowners who have fallen behind on rent or mortgage payments.

In a March 26 letter to Walensky seeking a moratorium until the pandemic runs its course, the leaders said the extension would protect vulnerable people from losing their homes.

Sending the letter were Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development; Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA; and Mercy Sister Mary

Haddad, president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association of the United States.

The trio also called for revising provisions of the moratorium so that it automatically applies to all people



Sr. Donna Markham, O.P.

who are unable to make full rent or mortgage payments, closes loopholes in the moratorium protections and enforces such protections to ensure the safety of all individuals.

Sister Donna told Catholic News Service (CNS) on March 29 that the moratorium must be extended to protect people's health.

"The importance of people to have a place to live is critical if we're to keep people healthy, if we're going to be able to support and care for their families in a humane way," she said.

Estimates of rent debt vary depending on who is doing the analysis.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia in January estimated rent debt at \$8.4 billion among 1.4 million renter households.

Another January study by the National Council of State Housing Agencies and Stout, a financial services firm, calculated rent debt of \$13.2 billion to \$24.2 billion among 7 million to 14.2 million renter households.

The Urban Institute calculated early in

2021 that rent debt stood at \$52.6 billion among 9.4 million renter households.

The recently passed American Rescue Plan Act includes \$25 billion in rental assistance. An additional \$25 billion for rental assistance was included in the



Sr. Mary Haddad, R.S.M.

coronavirus relief law passed by Congress in December.

Saying the Catholic Church teaches that safe, decent and affordable housing is a human right, the leaders explained to Walensky that housing serves as a "key social determinant of health, which is especially important during a pandemic."

"Individuals and families without stable housing have less opportunity to

protect themselves and others through social distancing, are more vulnerable to contracting the coronavirus, and are more likely to need acute care if they become infected," they wrote.

The letter described an "affordable housing crisis" that has existed since before the pandemic because of a lack of low-cost options and federal rental assistance that has failed to keep up with need. It cited findings by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University that identified people of color being most likely to be "cost-burdened by housing expenses."

"It will be necessary to invest in long-term solutions for thriving families and a more equitable society," the letter said.

The leaders also expressed gratitude for the CDC's earlier efforts to extend the moratorium beyond its original Jan. 31 end date as well as efforts to expand funding for rental assistance and to defend the moratorium in court cases. †

## Employment

### Administrative Coordinator

This position is a full-time position (35-40 hours per week) and reports to the rector of the Bishop Bruté College Seminary. Qualified applicants will have a bachelor's degree with experience in administration and accounting and a high skill level working with Microsoft Office software, including database and spreadsheet management, as well as the skills to collaborate with the Archdiocesan development staff who lay-out and design newsletters, brochures and other promotional materials. Applicants must have the proven ability to work with people in a wide variety of situations in a friendly and professional manner and safeguard confidential information. Success in this position requires working independently and taking initiative when appropriate. The seminary is a historic building, so the individual will need to be able to walk up and down stairs and occasionally decorate/prepare for events, such as seminary graduation and seminary board meetings.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintain the seminary office to support of seminary staff in an efficient and professional manner.
- Provide customer service and interact with potential students, families, vendors, priests, Marian University, and (arch) diocesan officials.
- Handle correspondence on behalf of the seminary and the rector and vice rector.
- Plan, coordinate and implement seminary events (4-5 per year).
- Negotiate with vendors on contracts and pricing.
- Purchase food for the seminary kitchen and janitorial supplies for maintenance of the seminary.
- Prepare annual budget in conjunction with the Office of Priest Personnel and the Archdiocesan Accounting Office.
- Process all check requests and expense reports on a weekly basis.
- Maintain employee personnel files and complete new hire paperwork.
- Invoice seminarians and dioceses for seminarian. meals/housing and formation fees (fall and spring each academic year).
- Provide administrative support for annual summer camp as needed to assist Vocations office (Bishop Bruté Days).
- Process all files for admission for seminarians.
- Maintain alumni database.
- Serve as a liaison to many diocesan vocations offices and personnel.
- Work with the Archdiocesan webmaster/development office to keep the seminary website information updated and accurate.
- Create and update the seminary calendar and seminary handbook.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the seminary rector.

Please e-mail cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

Ed Isakson  
Director, Human Resources  
Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
1400 N. Meridian St.  
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E-mail: eisakson@archindy.org

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## Employment

### Diocese of Evansville Director of Catechesis

The Diocese of Evansville seeks an energetic and inspiring Director of Catechesis.

The Director of the Office of Catechesis is responsible for continuing the mission of Jesus Christ through catechesis and evangelization throughout the diocese. This includes supporting a vision that encourages parishes to provide quality catechetical programs for all parishioners in keeping with the latest church documents, norms and directives.

Qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- Fully participating and practicing Catholic
- Advanced degree in theology, religious education or related field
- Five years of successful experience in Parish Catechetical Ministry and an awareness of diocesan needs and objectives
- Strong organizational, managerial and interpersonal skills that inspire confidence among Ordained, Religious, Catechetical Leaders, and other diocesan groups.

A complete position description can be found in the Employment Opportunities tab on the diocese's website: <http://www.evdio.org>

Those interested should send a cover letter and resume to [hr-catechesis@evdio.org](mailto:hr-catechesis@evdio.org). The deadline for priority consideration is April 9, 2021.

# Youths crossing at border lead to rise in offers of foster care help

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The message is still the same. The message's frequency is still the same. How the message is spread is still the same.

The only difference, it seems, is what's in the news.

Because of the quick rise in the number of unaccompanied minors crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, more people are responding to the call to help made on social media by the U.S. bishops' Migration and Refugee Services (MRS).

MRS posts messages on its Facebook and Twitter accounts about the need for foster care of young migrant children, both those crossing the border and refugee minors currently across the Atlantic Ocean awaiting foster families in the United States.

But MRS hasn't added any other social media outlets to its portfolio, and is posting that the foster care needs messages in the same rotation with other MRS resettlement programs. After all, "I don't want any one program to feel like we're not promoting them," according to Mark Priceman, MRS' assistant director of communications.

"They're the same messages. Basically, it gets picked up in times of crisis," Priceman told Catholic News Service (CNS) in a March 29 phone interview.

Priceman can point to two other times when this has happened: in 2017, when then-President Donald J. Trump's policies resulted in thousands of family separations (in 2018, he signed an executive order to end family separations). And in 2018, when there was an uptick similar to now of unaccompanied minors crossing the border.

He added his belief that the upsurge of interest in helping MRS is driven more by the news coverage of the border crossings than MRS' social media posts.



Young unaccompanied migrants, from ages 3 to 9, watch television inside a playpen on March 30 at the Donna holding facility in Donna, Texas, set up in February by U.S. Customs and Border Protection, an agency within the Department of Homeland Security. (CNS photo/Dario Lopez-Mills, Pool via Reuters)

"Some are looking to foster, some are looking to help in any way that they can," Priceman said.

"We're trying to get eyeballs to the program," he added. "That's the goal of it, to spread the word of what we're doing."

"The overarching theme is that we're welcoming the newcomer."

Lindsay Shah, the new MRS director of children's services and previously its associate director of foster care, said all MRS foster care programs are administered via federal grants. MRS works with the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement and the State Department. It places youths into different foster care programs through 17 different agencies—most, but not all, Catholic—in 13 states.

Shah said that the unaccompanied minors crossing the U.S.-Mexico border hail largely from the Central American nations of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The refugee children in need of foster placement come from "all over," she noted, although there is a large number from Eritrea.

While MRS is processing more children this year than in 2020, the numbers can be deceiving. "Actually, because of COVID, the numbers have declined pretty

significantly in the past year," Shah told CNS in a March 30 phone interview.

The nationwide network of resettlement agencies has been affected by progressively smaller caps over the past four years on the number of children who can be placed, she said. Social distancing precautions are also an issue.

Shah added: "Foster parents have different circumstances in their household—an elderly family member, or some other situation that may preclude them from adding someone."

Nor does today's increase of interest in foster care placement immediately result in more children being placed in U.S. homes, according to Shah. "The foster parents in our programs," she said, "receive extensive support and training. And also, some of the training is geared toward behavior challenges and cultural and linguistic issues." †

## CAPECCHI

continued from page 12

other descendants, Beth has responded to daunting circumstances with courage and trust. She dove into an unfamiliar job as a postal clerk after staying home with her kids. She led computer training for her colleagues when she utterly lacked savvy. She also uprooted her life and moved to South Carolina

for the benefit of her husband's health.

"Through the years I've learned that, as long as you're trusting and have faith, what's supposed to happen will work out," she said. "Elizabeth waited a long time to get married. She had to stand her ground and say, 'Nope, this is what's supposed to be.'"

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) †

## Classified Directory Continued from page 15

### Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Curriculum and Instruction

The Office of Catholic Schools of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a full-time Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Curriculum and Instruction to serve as a resource to administrators, teachers, staff, students, and families in the areas of curricular support, instructional best practices and student assessment. The duties of this position also include serving as a member of the Archdiocesan Schools Team as well as the liaison to the Indiana Department of Education. The Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Curriculum and Instruction is responsible for providing proactive leadership to ensure excellence in Catholic school education in support of the mission of the Office of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The position requires a master's degree in education, and at least five years of educational leadership experience, preferably in Catholic education. Applicants should be professed and practicing Roman Catholics with a deep commitment to Catholic education. Candidates should also have experience in development and/or marketing efforts and be proponents and role models of lifelong learning. Preference may be given to individuals who are bi-lingual and bi-cultural.

Application are due by April 15, 2021

Please e-mail cover letter, resume, and list of references, in confidence, to:

Ed Isakson  
Director, Human Resources  
Archdiocese of Indianapolis  
1400 N. Meridian St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
E-mail: [eisakson@archindy.org](mailto:eisakson@archindy.org)

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- Inspires collaboration from all internal and external constituent groups, using exceptional relationship-building, interpersonal, and communication skills
- Develops and updates the strategic plan for the future of the school
- Serves as an administrative officer of both the Hamilton County Catholic High School Corporation Board and the School Governing Board

#### Qualifications

- Practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church
- Proven success in advancing the mission of a business, nonprofit, or school
- Strong Advancement experience and financial acumen
- Transformational leader with innovative vision
- Leads with humility, serves with love, trusts in Providence

The anticipated start date of the President position is July 1, 2021. The President Profile and further information for this position can be found at [www.guerincatholic.org](http://www.guerincatholic.org)

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